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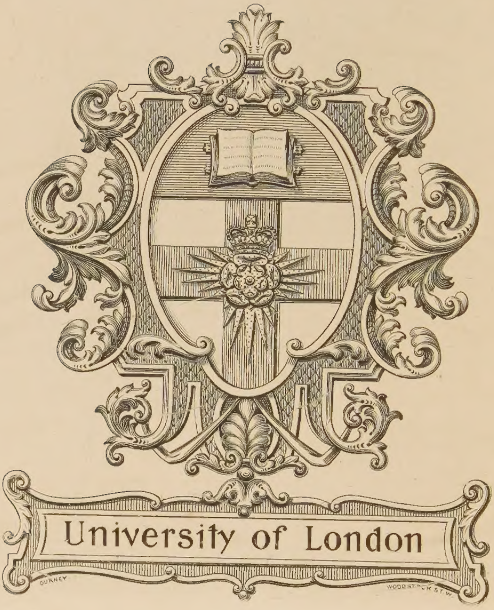

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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

FIFTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

4 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CXXIX.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE SECOND DAY OF FEBRUARY,
TO THE SIXTEENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY 1904.

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION.

1904.

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CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES commence with the year 1803, and the contents are set forth in the following Chronological Table:—

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HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF STATE, Etc.

RE-CONSTRUCTION OF THE CABINET, OCTOBER 1903.

Table Showing Changes in the Ministry.

THE CABINET.

Office.	Old Ministry.	New Ministry.
Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury.	Rt. Hon. Arthur J. Balfour, M.P.	Rt. Hon. Arthur J. Balfour, M.P.
Lord President of the Council.	His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, K.G.	Most Hon. the Marquess of Londonderry, K.G.
Lord Chancellor.	Rt. Hon. Earl of Halsbury.	Rt. Hon. Earl of Halsbury.
Secretaries of State—		
Home Department	Rt. Hon. A. Akers Douglas, M.P.	Rt. Hon. A. Akers Douglas, M.P.
Foreign Affairs.	Most Hon. the Marquess of Lansdowne, K.G.	Most Hon. the Marquess of Lansdowne.
Colonial Office.	Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, M.P.	Rt. Hon. Alfred Lyttelton, M.P.
War Office.	Rt. Hon. W. St. John Brodrick, M.P.	Rt. Hon. H. O. Arnold-Forster, M.P.
India Office.	Rt. Hon. Lord George Hamilton, M.P.	Rt. Hon. W. St. John Brodrick, M.P.
Chancellor of the Exchequer.	Rt. Hon. Chas. T. Ritchie, M.P.	Rt. Hon. J. Austen Chamberlain, M.P.
First Lord of the Admiralty.	Rt. Hon. Earl of Selborne.	Rt. Hon. Earl of Selborne.
Lord Chancellor of Ireland.	Rt. Hon. Lord Ashbourne.	Rt. Hon. Lord Ashbourne.
Chief Secretary for Ireland.	Rt. Hon. George Wyndham, M.P.	Rt. Hon. George Wyndham, M.P.
Lord Privy Seal.	Rt. Hon. Arthur J. Balfour.	The Most Hon. the Marquess of Salisbury.
President of the Board of Trade.	Rt. Hon. Gerald W. Balfour, M.P.	Rt. Hon. Gerald W. Balfour, M.P.
Postmaster-General.	J. Austen Chamberlain, Esq., M.P.	Lord Stanley, M.P.
Secretary for Scotland.	Rt. Hon. Lord Balfour of Burleigh.	Rt. Hon. A. Graham Murray, M.P.
President of the Local Government Board.	Rt. Hon. Walter H. Long, M.P.	Rt. Hon. Walter H. Long, M.P.
President of the Board of Agriculture.	Rt. Hon. Earl of Onslow.	Rt. Hon. Earl of Onslow.
President of the Board of Education.	The Most Hon. the Marquess of Londonderry.	The Most Hon. the Marquess of Londonderry.

NOT IN THE CABINET.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury.	Sir A. Acland Hood, Bt., M.P.	Sir A. Acland Hood, Bt., M.P.
Financial Secretary to the Treasury.	Hon. Arthur Elliot, M.P.	Victor Cavendish, Esq., M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education.	Sir William Anson, M.P.	Sir Wm. Anson, M.P.
Secretary to the Admiralty	H. O. Arnold-Forster, Esq., M.P.	E. G. Pretyman, Esq., M.P.
Lords of the Treasury.	H. T. Anstruther, Esq., M.P.	Lord Balcarres, M.P.
	Hon. Ailwyn Fellowes, M.P.	Hon. Ailwyn Fellowes, M.P.
	H. W. Forster, Esq., M.P.	H. W. Forster, Esq., M.P.
Lords of the Admiralty	Vice-Admiral Lord W. T. Kerr, K.C.B.	Admiral Lord W. T. Kerr, K.C.B.
	Vice-Admiral A. L. Douglas.	Rear-Admiral Sir C. C. Drury, K.C.S.I.
	Rear-Admiral W. H. May, M.V.O.	Rear-Admiral W. H. May, M.V.O.
	Capt. John Durnford, C.B., D.S.O.	Rear-Admiral John Durnford, C.B. D.S.O.

HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF STATE—(*Cont.*) NOT IN THE CABINET.—*Cont.*

Office.	Old Ministry.	New Ministry.
Army Council.	New Office.	The Secretary of State for War [*in the Cabinet*]. Lt.-Gen. Sir N. G. Lyttelton, K.C.B. Major - General C. W. H. Douglas. Major - General H. C. O. Plumer, C.B. Major - General Sir J. W. Murray, K.C.B. The Under Secretary of State for War The Financial Secretary to the War Office. *Secretary.* The Permanent Under Secretary of State for War (Col. Sir E. W. D. Ward, K.C.B.
Civil Lord of the Admiralty.	E. G. Pretyman, Esq., M P.	Arthur H. Lee, Esq., M.P.
Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.	Rt. Hon. Earl of Dudley.	Rt. Hon. Earl of Dudley.
The Lord Advocate.	Hon. A. Graham Murray, M.P.	C. Scott Dickson, Esq., K.C., M.P.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.	Rt. Hon. Sir William Walrond, Bt., M.P.	Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Walrond, Bt., M.
Parliamentary Secretary, Foreign Office.	*Lord Cranborne, M.P.	Earl Percy, M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary, Home Office.	Hon. T. H. Cochrane, M.P.	Hon. T. H. Cochrane, M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary, Colonial Office.	His Grace, the Duke of Marlborough.	His Grace the Duke of Marlborough.
Parliamentary Secretary, India Office.	Earl Percy, M.P.	Rt. Hon. Earl of Hardwicke.
Parliamentary Secretary, War Office.	Rt. Hon. Earl of Hardwicke.	Rt. Hon. Earl of Donoughmore.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade.	A. Bonar Law, Esq., M.P.	A. Bonar Law, Esq., M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board.	J. Grant Lawson, Esq., M.P.	J. Grant Lawson, Esq., M.P.
Financial Secretary, War Office.	Lord Stanley, M.P.	W. Bromley Davenport, Esq., M.P.
Attorney-General.	Sir R. B. Finlay, K.C., M.P.	Sir R. B. Finlay, K.C., M.P.
Solicitor-General.	Rt. Hon. Sir E. Carson, K.C., M.P.	Rt. Hon. Sir E. Carson, K.C., M P.

OTHER OFFICERS OF STATE.

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Treasurer of the Household——The Marquess of Hamilton, M.P.
Captain Yeomen of the Guard—Rt. Hon. Earl Waldegrave.

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- Rt. Hon. Earl of Denbigh.
- Rt. Hon. Lord Churchill, K.C.V.O.
- Rt. Hon. Earl Howe.
- Rt. Hon. Lord Lawrence.
- Rt. Hon. Lord Bagot.
- Rt. Hon. Lord Suffield, G.C.V.O., K.C.B.
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* Appears in new Ministry under title of Marquess of Salisbury.

OTHER OFFICERS OF STATE.—(*Cont.*)

IRELAND.

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Lord Chancellor——Rt. Hon. Lord ASHBOURNE.
Chief Secretary——Rt. Hon. GEORGE WYNDHAM, M.P.
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AN ALPHABETICAL LIST

OF THE

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

IN THE

FIFTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

---

4 EDWARD VII. 1904.

NOTE.—*The Figures in the Margin refer to the corresponding Figures on the Roll.*

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75 Abingdon, Montagu Arthur Earl of
398 Abinger, Shelley Leopold Laurence Lord
462 Acton, Richard Maximilian Lord
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47 Ailsa, Archibald Marquess of
3 Albany, His Royal Highness Leopold Charles Edward George Albert Duke of
77 Albemarle, Arnold Allan Cecil Earl of
566 Aldenham, Henry Hucks Lord
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594 Allerton, William Lawies Lord
591 Alverstone, Richard Everard Lord
158 Amherst, William Archer Earl
545 Amherst of Hackney, William Amhurst Lord
491 Ampthill, Arthur Oliver Villiers Lord
194 Ancaster, Gilbert Henry Earl of
43 Anglesey, Henry Cyril Marquess of
441 Annaly, Luke Lord
125 Annesley, Hugh Earl. (*Elected for Ireland*)
487 Ardilaun, Arthur Edward Lord
31 Argyll, John Douglas Sutherland Duke of
602 Armstrong, William Henry Armstrong FitzPatrick Lord
284 Arundell of Wardour, John Francis Lord
511 Ashbourne, Edward Lord
99 Ashburnham, Bertram Earl of
400 Ashburton, Francis Denzil Edward Lord
542 Ashcombe, George Lord
561 Ashton, James Lord
327 Auckland, William Morton Lord
587 Avebury, John Lord
93 Aylesford, Charles Wightwick Earl of

B

312 Bagot, William Lord
458 Balinhard, James Lord. (*Earl of Southesk*)
296 Balfour of Burley, Alexander Hugh Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)
128 Bandon, James Francis Earl of (*Elected for Ireland*)
210 Bangor, Henry William Crosbie Viscount. (*Elected for Ireland*)
291 Barnard, Henry de Vere Lord
595 Barrymore, Arthur Hugh Lord
531 Basing, George Limbrey Lord
406 Bateman, William Spencer Lord
36 Bath, Thomas Henry Marquess of
258 Bath and Wells, George Wyndham Bishop of
111 Bathurst, Seymour Henry Earl
550 Battersea, Cyril Lord
151 Beauchamp, William Earl
14 Beaufort, Henry Adelbert Wellington Fitzroy Duke of
17 Bedford, Herbrand Arthur Duke of
297 Belhaven and Stenton, Alexander Charles Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)
127 Belmore, Somerset Richard Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
428 Belper, Henry Lord
74 Berkeley, Randal Mowbray Thomas Earl of
317 Berwick, Richard Henry Lord
600 Biddulph, Michael Lord
543 Blythswood, Archibald Campbell Lord
203 Bolingbroke and St. John, ——— Viscount
335 Bolton, William Thomas Lord
304 Boston, George Florance Lord
272 Botreaux, Charles Edward Hastings Lord. (*Earl of Loudoun*)
527 Bowes, Claude Lord. (*Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorn*)
298 Boyle, Richard Edmund St. Lawrence Lord. (*Earl of Cork and Orrery*)
490 Brabourne, Edward Lord
150 Bradford, George Cecil Orlando Earl of
583 Brampton, Henry Lord
449 Brancepeth, Gustavus Russell Lord. (*Viscount Boyne*)
21 Brandon, Alfred Douglas Duke of
524 Brassey, Thomas Lord
323 Braybrooke, Henry Lord
277 Braye, Alfred Thomas Townshend Lord
51 Breadalbane, Gavin Marquess of
226 Bridport, Alexander Nelson Viscount
46 Bristol, Frederick William John Marquess of
264 Bristol, George Forrest Bishop of
332 Brodrick, William Lord. (*Viscount Midleton*)
102 Brooke, Francis Richard Charles Guy Earl, and Earl of Warwick
437 Brougham and Vaux, Henry Charles Lord
147 Brownlow, Adelbert Wellington Brownlow Earl
103 Buckinghamshire, Sidney Carr Earl of
562 Burghclere, Herbert Coulstoun Lord
599 Burnham, Edward Levy Lord
522 Burton, Michael Arthur Lord
39 Bute, John Marquess of
288 Byron, George Frederick William Lord

C

119 Cadogan, George Henry Earl
185 Cairns, Herbert John Earl
333 Calthorpe, Augustus Cholmondeley Lord
4 Cambridge, His Royal Highness George William Frederick Charles Duke of
42 Camden, John Charles Marquess
273 Camoys, Ralph Francis Julian Lord
161 Camperdown, Robert Adam Philips Haldane Earl of
5 Canterbury, Randall Thomas Archbishop of
221 Canterbury, Henry Charles Viscount
409 Carew, Robert Shapland George Julian Lord
320 Carleton, Richard Henry Lord. (*Earl of Shannon*)
71 Carlisle, George James Earl of
256 Carlisle, John Wareing Bishop of

118	Carnarvon, George Edward Stanhope Molyneux Earl of
86	Carnwath, Robert Harris Carnwath Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
195	Carrington, Charles Robert Earl
350	Carysfort, William Lord. (*Earl of Carysfort*)
360	Castlemaine, Albert Edward Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
461	Castletown, Bernard Edward Barnaby Lord
145	Cathcart, Alan Frederick Earl
159	Cawdor, Frederick Archibald Vaughan Earl
390	Chaworth, Reginald Lord. (*Earl of Meath*)
432	Chelmsford, Frederic Augustus Lord
431	Chesham, Charles Compton William Lord
252	Chester, Francis John Bishop of
68	Chesterfield, Edwyn Francis Earl of
533	Cheylesmore, Herbert Francis Lord
133	Chichester, Francis Godolphin Earl of
245	Chichester, Ernest Roland Bishop of
44	Cholmondeley, George Henry Hugh Marquess of
239	Churchill, Victor Albert Francis Charles Viscount
433	Churston, John Lord
219	Clancarty, William Frederick Viscount. (*Earl of Clancarty*)
383	Clanwilliam, Richard James Lord. (*Earl of Clanwilliam*)
56 & 113	Clarendon, Edward Hyde Earl of. (*Lord Chamberlain of the Household*)
388	Clements, Charles Lord. (*Earl of Leitrim*)
289	Clifford of Chudleigh, Lewis Henry Hugh Lord
269	Clinton, Charles Henry Rolle Lord
343	Clonbrock, Luke Gerald Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
395	Cloncurry, Valentine Frederick Lord
204	Cobham, Charles George Viscount
365	Colchester, Reginald Charles Edward Lord
471	Coleridge, Bernard John Seymour Lord
238	Colville of Culross, Charles Robert William Viscount
220	Combermere, Francis Lynch Wellington Viscount
422	Congleton, Henry Lord
2	Connaught and Strathearn, His Royal Highness Arthur William Patrick Albert Duke of
174	Cottenham, Kenelm Charles Edward Earl of
473	Cottesloe, Thomas Francis Lord
78	Coventry, George William Earl of
175	Cowley, Henry Arthur Mornington Earl
94	Cowper, Francis Thomas de Grey Earl
193	Cranbrook, Gathorne Earl of
584	Cranworth, Bertram Francis Lord
130	Craven, William George Robert Earl of
544	Crawshaw, Thomas Lord
196	Crewe, Robert Offley Ashburton Earl of
345	Crofton, Edward Henry Churchill Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
200	Cromer, Evelyn Earl of
230	Cross, Richard Assheton Viscount
26	Cumberland and Teviotdale, His Royal Highness Ernest Augustus William Adolphus George Fredk Duke of
581	Currie, Philip Henry Wodehouse Lord
	D
91	Dartmouth, William Heneage Earl of
180	Dartrey, Vesey Earl of
558	Davey, Horace Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
572	Dawnay, Hugh Richard Lord. (*Viscount Downe*)
268	de Clifford, Jack Southwell Lord
424	De Freyne, Arthur Lord
108	De La Warr, Gilbert Geo. Reginald Earl
399	De L'Isle and Dudley, Philip Lord
410	De Mauley, William Ashley Webb Lord
191	de Montalt, Cornwallis Earl

532 De Ramsey, William Henry Lord
265 de Ros, Dudley Charles Lord
396 De Saumarez, James St. Vincent Lord
372 Delamere, Hugh Lord
63 Denbigh, Rudolph Robert Basil Aloysius Augustine Earl of
397 Denman, Thomas Lord
513 Deramore, Robert Wilfrid Lord
58 Derby, Frederick Arthur Earl of
495 Derwent, Harcourt Lord
61 Devon, Charles Pepys Earl of
18 Devonshire, Spencer Compton Duke of.
307 Digby, Edward Henry Trafalgar Lord
310 Dinevor, Arthur de Cardonnel Lord
72 Doncaster, William Henry Walter Earl of. (*Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry*)
285 Dormer, Ronald John Lord
475 Douglas, Charles Alexander Lord. (*Earl of Home*)
122 Drogheda, Ponsonby William Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
166 Ducie, Henry John Earl of
177 Dudley, William Humble Earl of
52 Dufferin and Ava, Terence John Temple Marquess of
348 Dunalley, Henry O'Callaghan Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
338 Dunboyne, Robert St. John Fitz-Walter Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
89 Dundonald, Douglas Mackinnon Baillie Hamilton Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
547 Dunleath, Henry Lyle Lord
391 Dunmore, Charles Adolphus Lord. (*Earl of Dunmore*)
457 Dunning, John Lord. (*Lord Rollo*)
163 Durham, John George Earl of
242 Durham, Handley Carr Glynn Bishop of

E

430 Ebury, Robert Wellesley Lord
165 Effingham, Henry Alexander Gordon Earl of
197 Egerton, Wilbraham Earl
152 Eldon, John Earl of
423 Elgin, Victor Alexander Lord. (*Earl of Elgin and Kincardine*)
352 Ellenborough, Edward Downes Lord
172 Ellesmere, Francis Charles Granville Earl of
515 Elphinstone, Sidney Herbert Lord
251 Ely, Alwyne Bishop of
472 Emly, Thomas William Gaston Lord
355 Erskine, William Macnaghten Lord
234 Esher, Reginald Baliol Viscount
70 Essex, George Devereux de Vere Earl of
601 Estcourt, George Thomas John Lord
467 Ettrick, William John George Lord. (*Lord Napier*)
40 Exeter, William Thomas Brownlow Marquess of
217 Exmouth, Edward Addington Hargreaves Viscount

F

571 Fairlie, David Lord. (*Earl of Glasgow*)
202 Falkland, Byron Plantagenet Viscount. (*Elected for Scotland*)
205 Falmouth, Evelyn Edward Thomas Viscount
578 Farquhar, Horace Brand Lord
552 Farrer, Thomas Cecil Lord
477 Fermanagh, John Henry Lord. (*Earl Erne*)
90 Ferrers, Sewallis Edward Earl
181 Feversham, William Ernest Earl of
536 Field, William Ventris Lord
30 Fife, Alexander William George Duke of
386 Fingall, Arthur James Francis Lord. (*Earl of Fingall*)
324 Fisherwick, George Augustus Hamilton Lord. (*Marquess of Donegall*)
440 Fitzhardinge, Charles Paget Fitzhardinge Lord
104 Fitzwilliam, William Charles De Meuron Earl
309 Foley, Henry Thomas Lord
292 Forbes, Horace Courtenay Gammell Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)
373 Forester, Cecil Theodore Lord

117 Fortescue, Hugh Earl

363 Foxford, William Henry Edmond de Vere Sheaffe Lord. (*Earl of Limerick*)

G

325 Gage, Henry Charles Lord. (*Viscount Gage*)

171 Gainsborough, Charles William Francis Earl of

358 Gardner, ——— Lord

481 Gerard, Frederic John Lord

375 Gifford, Edric Frederic Lord

582 Glanusk, Joseph Russell Lord

565 Glenesk, Algernon Lord

244 Gloucester, Charles John Bishop of

216 Gordon, John Campbell Viscount. (*Earl of Aberdeen*)

454 Gormanston, Jenico William Joseph Lord. (*Viscount Gormanston*)

235 Goschen, George Joachim Viscount

224 Gough, Hugh Viscount

13 Grafton, Augustus Charles Lennox Duke of

97 Graham, Douglas Beresford Malise Ronald Earl. (*Duke of Montrose*)

357 Granard, Bernard Arthur William Patrick Hastings Lord. (*Earl of Granard*)

314 Grantley, John Richard Brinsley Lord

164 Granville, Granville George Earl

596 Grenfell, Francis Wallace Lord

464 Greville, Algernon William Fulke Lord

140 Grey, Albert Henry George Earl

271 Grey de Ruthyn, Rawdon George Grey Lord

519 Grimthorpe, Edmund Lord

362 Grinstead, Lowry Egerton Lord (*Earl of Enniskillen*)

105 Guilford, Frederick George Earl of

334 Gwydir, Peter Robert Lord

H

84 Haddington, George Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)

485 Haldon, Lawrence William Lord

580 Haliburton, Arthur Lawrence Lord

225 Halifax, Charles Lindley Viscount

6 & 198 Halsbury, Hardinge Stanley Earl of. (*Lord High Chancellor*)

523 Hamilton of Dalzell, Gavin George Lord

228 Hampden, Henry Robert Viscount

474 Hampton, Herbert Perrott Murray Lord

223 Hardinge, Henry Charles Viscount

106 Hardwicke, Albert Edward Philip Henry Earl of

459 Hare, William Lord. (*Earl of Listowel*)

143 Harewood, Henry Ulick Earl of

478 Harlech, William Richard Lord

100 Harrington, Charles Augustus Earl of

364 Harris, George Robert Canning Lord

142 Harrowby, John Herbert Dudley Earl of

446 Hartismere, Charles Henry Chandos Lord. (*Lord Henniker*)

267 Hastings, George Manners Lord

401 Hatherton, Edward George Percy Lord

211 Hawarden, Cornwallis Viscount. (*Elected for Ireland*) (*In another place as Earl de Montalt*)

308 Hawke, Martin Bladen Lord

554 Hawkesbury, Cecil George Savile Lord

299 Hay, Archibald Fitzroy George Lord. (*Earl of Kinnoul*)

344 Headley, Charles Mark Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)

567 Heneage, Edward Lord

201 Hereford, Robert Viscount

259 Hereford, John Bishop of

503 Herries, Marmaduke Francis Lord

516 Herschell, Richard Farrer Lord

38 Hertford, Hugh de Grey Marquess of

381 Heytesbury, Leonard Lord

222 Hill, Rowland Richard Viscount

517 Hillingdon, Charles William Lord

112 Hillsborough, Arthur Wills John Wellington Trumbull Blundell Earl of. (*Marquess of Downshire*)

518 Hindlip, Charles Lord

509	Hobhouse, Arthur Lord
574	Holm Patrick, Hans Wellesley Lord
208	Hood, Francis Wheler Viscount
496	Hothfield, Henry James Lord
460	Howard of Glossop, Francis Edward Lord
281	Howard de Walden, Thomas Evelyn Lord
153	Howe, George Richard Penn Earl
493	Howth, William Ulick Tristram Lord. (*Earl of Howth*)
59	Huntingdon, Warner Francis John Plantagenet Earl of
218	Hutchinson, Richard Walter John Viscount. (*Earl of Donoughmore*)
447	Hylton, Hylton George Hylton Lord

I

190	Iddesleigh, Walter Stafford Earl of
107	Ilchester, Henry Edward Earl of
339	Inchiquin, Lucius William Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
168	Innes, Henry John Earl. (*Duke of Roxburghe*)
575	Inverclyde, George Arbuthnot Lord
537	Iveagh, Edward Cecil Lord

J

563	James, Henry Lord
79	Jersey, Victor Albert George Earl of

K

540	Kelvin, William Lord
389	Kenlis, Geoffrey Thomas Lord. (*Marquess of Headfort*)
427	Kenmare, Valentine Augustus Lord. (*Earl of Kenmare*)
444	Kenry, Windham Thomas Lord. (*Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Earl*)
521	Kensington, Hugh Lord
322	Kenyon, Lloyd Lord
366	Ker, Robert Schomberg Lord. (*Marquess of Lothian*)
450	Kesteven, John Henry Lord
589	Killanin, Martin Henry Lord.
342	Kilmaine, Francis William Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
385	Kilmarnock, Charles Gore Lord (*Earl of Erroll*)
156	Kilmorey, Francis Charles Earl of (*Elected for Ireland*)
179	Kimberley, John Earl of
438	Kinnaird, Arthur Fitz-Gerald Lord
569	Kinnear, Alexander Smith Lord
592	Kinross, John Blair Lord
407	Kintore, Algernon Hawkins Thomond Lord (*Earl of Kintore*)
237	Kitchener of Khartoum and of the Vaal, Horatio Herbert Viscount
597	Knollys, Francis Lord
232	Knutsford, Henry Thurstan Viscount

L

488	Lamington, Charles Wallace Alexander Napier Lord
123	Lanesborough, John Vansittart Danvers Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
346	Langford, Hercules Edward Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
33	Lansdowne, Henry Charles Keith Marquess of
187	Lathom, Edward George Earl of
85	Lauderdale, Frederick Henry Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
456	Lawrence, John Hamilton Lord
434	Leconfield, Charles Henry Lord
16	Leeds, George Godolphin Duke of
169	Leicester, Thomas William Earl of
415	Leigh, William Henry Lord
207	Leinster, Maurice Viscount. (*Duke of Leinster*)
87	Leven and Melville, Ronald Ruthven Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
162	Lichfield, Thomas Francis Earl of
255	Lichfield, Augustus Bishop of
336	Lilford, John Lord
249	Lincoln, Edward Bishop of
588	Lindley, Nathaniel Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
65	Lindsey, Montague Peregrine Albemarle Earl of
510	Lingen, Ralph Robert Wheeler Lord
54	Linlithgow, John Adrian Louis Marquess of
570	Lister, Joseph Lord

233 Llandaff, Henry Viscount
246 Llandaff, Richard Bishop of
548 Llangattock, John Allan Lord
559 Loch, Edward Douglas Lord
349 Loftus, John Henry Lord. (*Marquess of Ely*)
192 Londesborough, William Francis Henry Earl of
241 London, Arthur Foley Bishop of
141 Lonsdale, Hugh Cecil Earl of
405 Lovat, Simon Joseph Lord
170 Lovelace, Ralph Gordon Earl of
305 Lovel and Holland, Augustus Arthur Lord. (*Earl of Egmont*)
126 Lucan, George Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
573 Ludlow, Henry Ludlow Lord
417 Lurgan, William Lord
186 Lytton, Victor Alexander George Robert Earl of
436 Lyveden, Courtenay Robert Percy Lord

M

96 Macclesfield, George Loveden William Henry Earl of
526 Macnaghten, Edward Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
530 Magheramorne, Dudley Stuart Lord
120 Malmesbury, James Edward Earl of
23 Manchester, William Angus Drogo Duke of
290 Manners of Haddon, Henry John Brinsley Lord. (*Marquess of Granby*)
359 Manners, John Thomas Lord
114 Mansfield, William David Earl of
138 Manvers, Charles William Sydney Earl
81 Mar, John Francis Erskine Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
83 Mar and Kellie, Walter John Francis Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
19 Marlborough, Charles Richard John Duke of
539 Masham, Samuel Lord
340 Massy, John Thomas William Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)
124 Mayo, Dermot Robert Wyndham Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
361 Meldrum, Charles Lord. (*Marquess of Huntly*)
213 Melville, Henry Viscount
328 Mendip, Thomas Charles Lord. (*Viscount Clifden*)
443 Meredyth, James Herbert Gustavus Meredyth Lord. (*Lord Athlumney*)
413 Methuen, Paul Sanford Lord
300 Middleton, Digby Wentworth Bayard Lord
240 Milner, Alfred Viscount
367 Minster, Victor George Henry Francis Lord. (*Marquess Conyngham*)
144 Minto, Gilbert John Earl of
445 Monck, Henry Power Charles Stanley Lord. (*Viscount Monck*)
528 Monckton, George Edmund Milnes Lord. (*Viscount Galway*)
470 Moncreiff, Henry James Lord
500 Monk Bretton, John William Lord
508 Monkswell, Robert Lord
301 Monson, Augustus Debonnaire John Lord
514 Montagu of Beaulieu, Henry John Lord
356 Monteagle, Henry Ulick Lord (*Marquess of Sligo*)
418 Monteagle of Brandon, Thomas Spring Lord
149 Morley, Albert Edmund Earl of
82 Morton, Sholto George Watson Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)
393 Mostyn, Llewelyn Nevill Vaughan Lord
116 Mount Edgcumbe, William Henry Earl of
538 Mount Stephen, George Lord
266 Mowbray, Charles Botolph Joseph Lord
579 Muncaster, Josslyn Francis Lord
160 Munster, Aubrey Earl of
341 Muskerry, Hamilton Matthew Fitzmaurice Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)

N

453 Napier, Robert William Lord

135 Nelson, Horatio Earl

24 Newcastle, Henry Pelham Archibald Douglas Duke of

577 Newlands, William Wallace Lord

546 Newton, Thomas Wodehouse Lord

10 Norfolk, Henry Duke of. (*Earl Marshal of England*)

48 Normanby, Constantine Charles Henry Marquess of

279 North, William Henry John Lord

41 Northampton, William George Spencer Scott Marquess of

501 Northbourne, Walter Henry Lord

184 Northbrook, Thomas George Earl of

586 Northcote, Henry Stafford Lord

88 Northesk, David John Earl of. (*Elected for Scotland*)

505 Northington, Frederic Lord. (*Lord Henley*)

25 Northumberland, Henry George Duke of

483 Norton, Charles Bowyer Lord

257 Norwich, John Bishop of

O

590 O'Brien, Peter Lord

465 O'Hagan, Maurice Herbert Ignatius Towneley Lord

452 O'Neill, Edward Lord

131 Onslow, William Hillier Earl of

404 Oranmore and Browne, Geoffrey Henry Browne Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)

139 Orford, Robert Horace Earl of

371 Oriel, Clotworthy John Eyre Lord. (*Viscount Massereene*)

451 Ormathwaite, Arthur Lord

368 Ormonde, James Edward William Theobald Lord. (*Marquess of Ormonde*)

553 Overtoun, John Campbell Lord

420 Oxenfoord, John Hew North Gustave Henry Lord. (*Earl of Stair*)

P

231 Peel, Arthur Wellesley Viscount

55 & 60 Pembroke and Montgomery, Sidney Earl of. (*Lord Steward of the Household*)

448 Penrhyn, George Sholto Gordon Lord

262 Peterborough, Edward Carr Bishop of

282 Petre, Bernard Henry Philip Lord

549 Playfair, George James Lord

380 Plunket, William Lee Lord

392 Poltimore, Augustus Frederick George Warwick Lord

302 Ponsonby, Walter William Brabazon Lord. (*Earl of Bessborough*)

22 Portland, William John Arthur Charles James Duke of

227 Portman, William Henry Berkeley Viscount

101 Portsmouth, Newton Earl of

80 Poulett, William John Lydston Earl

209 Powerscourt, Mervyn Edward Viscount. (*Elected for Ireland*)

504 Powerscourt, Mervyn Edward Lord. (*In another place as Viscount Powerscourt*)

135 Powis, George Charles Earl of

R

109 Radnor, Jacob Earl of

426 Raglan, George Fitz-Roy Henry Lord

476 Ramsay, Arthur George Maule Lord. (*Earl of Dalhousie*)

378 Ranfurly, Uchter John Mark Lord. (*Earl of Ranfurly*)

455 Rathdonnell, Thomas Kane Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)

564 Rathmore, David Robert Lord

182 Ravensworth, Atholl Charles Earl of

374 Rayleigh, John William Lord

494 Reay, Donald James Lord

598 Redesdale, Algernon Bertram Lord

556 Rendel, Stuart Lord

507 Revelstoke, John Lord

337 Ribblesdale, Thomas Lord

12 Richmond, Charles Henry Duke of

236 Ridley, Matthew White Viscount

49 Ripon, George Frederick Samuel Marquess of

248 Ripon, William Boyd Bishop of

199 Roberts, Frederick Sleigh Earl

585 Robertson, James Patrick Bannerman Lord. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)

260	Rochester, Edward Stuart Bishop of
315	Rodney, George Bridges Harley Dennett Lord
442	Romilly, John Gaspard Le Marchant Lord
132	Romney, Charles Earl of
382	Rosebery, Archibald Philip Lord. (*Earl of Rosebery*)
568	Rosmead, Hercules Arthur Temple Lord
137	Rosse, Lawrence Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)
129	Rosslyn, James Francis Harry Earl of
408	Rossmore, Derrick Warner William Lord
506	Rothschild, Nathaniel Mayer Lord
178	Russell, John Francis Stanley Earl
20	Rutland, John James Robert Duke of

S

482	Sackville, Lionel Sackville Lord
15	St. Albans, Charles Victor Albert Aubrey De Vere Duke of
261	St. Albans, Edgar, Bishop of
253	St. Asaph, Alfred George Bishop of
263	St. Davids, John Bishop of
148	Saint Germans, Henry Cornwallis Earl of
280	St. John of Bletso, Beauchamp Moubray Lord
425	Saint Leonards, Edward Burtenshaw Lord
529	Saint Levan, John Lord
512	Saint Oswald, Rowland Lord
212	St. Vincent, Carnegie Parker Viscount
9 & 35	Salisbury, James Edward Hubert Marquess of. (*Lord Privy Seal*)
250	Salisbury, John Bishop of
331	Saltersford, James George Henry Lord. (*Earl of Courtown*)
293	Saltoun, Alexander William Fredk. Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)
466	Sandhurst, William Lord
69	Sandwich, Edward George Henry Earl of
353	Sandys, Augustus Frederick Arthur Lord
535	Savile, John Savile Lord
283	Saye and Sele, John Fiennes Lord
76	Scarborough, Aldred Fredk. George Beresford Earl of
303	Scarsdale, Alfred Nathaniel Holden Lord
419	Seaton, John Reginald Upton Lord
387	Sefton, Osbert Cecil Lord. (*Earl of Sefton*)
189	Selborne, William Waldegrave Earl of
73	Shaftesbury, Anthony Earl of
541	Shand, Alexander Burns Lord
354	Sheffield, Henry North Lord. (*Earl of Sheffield*)
318	Sherborne, Edward Lennox Lord
57	Shrewsbury, Charles Henry John Earl of
484	Shute, Walter Bulkeley Lord. (*Viscount Barrington*)
593	Shuttleworth, Ughtred James Lord
214	Sidmouth, William Wells Viscount
370	Silchester, Thomas Lord. (*Earl of Longford*)
294	Sinclair, Charles William Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)
376	Somerhill, Hubert George Lord. (*Marquess of Clanricarde*)
316	Somers, Arthur Herbert Tennyson Lord
11	Somerset, Algernon Duke of
468	Somerton, Sidney James Lord. (*Earl of Normanton*)
188	Sondes, George Edward Earl
313	Southampton, Charles Henry Lord
247	Southwell, George Bishop of
110	Spencer, John Poyntz Earl
287	Stafford, Fitzherbert Lord
520	Stalbridge, Richard de Aquila Lord
66	Stamford, William Earl of
95	Stanhope, Arthur Philip Earl
414	Stanley of Alderley, Edward Lyulph Lord
555	Stanmore, Arthur Lord
330	Stewart of Garlies, Randolph Henry Lord. (*Earl of Galloway*)
154	Stradbroke, George Edward John Mowbray Earl of
173	Strafford, Francis Edmund Cecil Earl of

115 Strange, John James Hugh Henry Earl. (*Duke of Atholl*)

576 Strathcona and Mount Royal, Donald Alexander Lord

403 Stratheden, Hallyburton George Lord

499 Strathspey, James Lord. (*Earl of Seafield*)

329 Stuart of Castle Stuart, Francis James Lord. (*Earl of Moray*)

412 Sudeley, Charles Douglas Richard Lord

502 Sudley, Arthur Jocelyn Charles Lord. (*Earl of Arran*)

321 Suffield, Charles Lord

62 Suffolk and Berkshire, Henry Molyneux Paget Earl of

28 Sutherland, Cromartie Duke of

551 Swansea, Ernest Ambrose Lord

T

429 Talbot de Malahide, Richard Wogan Lord

92 Tankerville, George Montagu Earl of

155 Temple of Stowe, Algernon William Stephen Earl

394 Templemore, Henry Spencer Lord

215 Templetown, Henry Edward Montagu Dorington Clotworthy Viscount. (*Elected for Ireland*)

498 Tennyson, Hallam Lord

379 Tenterden, Charles Stuart Henry Lord

286 Teynham, Henry John Philip Sidney Lord

525 Thring, Henry Lord

326 Thurlow, Thomas John Lord

480 Tollemache, Wilbraham Frederic Lord

295 Torphichen, James Walter Lord. (*Elected for Scotland*)

206 Torrington, George Master Viscount

34 Townshend, John James Dudley Stuart Marquess

435 Tredegar, Godfrey Charles Lord

489 Trevor, Arthur William Lord

254 Truro, John Bishop of

492 Tweeddale, William Montagu Lord. (*Marquess of Tweeddale*)

497 Tweedmouth, Edward Lord

319 Tyrone, Henry De La Poer Lord. (*Marquess of Waterford*)

V

8 & 157 Vane, Charles Stewart Earl. (*Marquess of Londonderry*) (*Lord President of the Council*)

275 Vaux of Harrowden, Hubert George Charles Lord

347 Ventry, Dayrolles Blakeney Lord. (*Elected for Ireland*)

306 Vernon, George Francis Augustus Lord

146 Verulam, James Walter Earl of

421 Vivian, George Crespigny Brabazon Lord

W

1 Wales, His Royal Highness The Prince of

98 Waldegrave, William Frederick Earl

311 Walsingham, Thomas Lord

560 Wandsworth, Sydney James Lord

557 Welby, Reginald Earle Lord

27 Wellington, Arthur Charles Duke of

369 Wemyss, Francis Richard Lord. (*Earl of Wemyss*)

416 Wenlock, Beilby Lord

276 Wentworth, Ralph Gordon Lord. (*In another place as Earl of Lovelace*)

439 Westbury, Richard Luttrell Pilkington Lord

121 Westmeath, Anthony Francis Earl of. (*Elected for Ireland*)

29 Westminster, Hugh Richard Arthur Duke of

64 Westmorland, Anthony Mildmay Julian Earl of

183 Wharncliffe, Francis John Earl of

377 Wigan, James Ludovic Lord. (*Earl of Crawford*)

274 Willoughby de Broke, Richard Greville Lord

134 Wilton, Arthur George Earl of

486 Wimborne, Ivor Bertie Lord

32 Winchester, Henry William Montagu Marquess of

243 Winchester, Herbert Edward Bishop of

67 Winchilsea and Nottingham, Henry Stormont Earl of

278 Windsor, Robert George Lord

176 Winton, George Arnulph Earl of. (*Earl of Eglintoun*)

229 Wolseley, Garnet Joseph Viscount

463 Wolverton, Frederick Lord

402 Worlingham, Archibald Brabazon Sparrow Lord. (*Earl of Gosford*)

411 Wrottesley, Arthur Lord

384 Wynford, George Lord

Y

167 Yarborough, Chas. Alfred Worsley Earl of

7 York, William Dalrymple Archbishop of

Z

53 Zetland, Lawrence Marquess of

270 Zouche of Haryngworth, Robert Nathaniel Cecil George Lord

The following Lords have Two Numbers, being Twice named in the Roll :

Earl of Halsbury, as Lord High Chancellor, and as Earl of Halsbury. (Nos. 6 and 198.)

Earl Vane (Marquess of Londonderry), as Lord President, and as Earl Vane (Marquess of Londonderry). (Nos. 8 and 157.)

Marquess of Salisbury, as Lord Privy Seal, and as Marquess of Salisbury. (Nos. 9 and 35.)

Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, as Lord Steward, and as Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. (Nos. 55 and 60.)

Earl of Clarendon, as Lord Chamberlain, and as Earl of Clarendon. (Nos. 56 and 113.)

Earl of Lovelace, as Earl of Lovelace, and as Lord Wentworth. (Nos. 170 and 276.)

Earl de Montalt, as Earl de Montalt, and as Viscount Hawarden. (Nos. 191 and 211.)

Viscount Powerscourt, as Viscount Powerscourt, and as Lord Powerscourt. (Nos. 209 and 504.)

ROLL

OF THE

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL

IN THE

FIFTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OF

THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

4 EDWARD VII. 1904.

MEM.—*According to the Usage of Parliament, when the House appoints a Select Committee the Lords appointed to serve upon it are named in the Order of their Rank, beginning with the Highest; and so, when the House sends a Committee to a Conference with the Commons, the Lord highest in Rank is called first, and the rest go forth in like Order: But when the Whole House is called over for any Purpose, within the House, or for the Purpose of proceeding forth to Westminster Hall, or upon any public Solemnity, the Call begins invariably with the Junior Baron.*

1 His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.

2 His Royal Highness Arthur William Patrick Albert Duke of Connaught and Strathearn

3 His Royal Highness Leopold Charles Edward George Albert Duke of Albany

4 His Royal Highness George William Frederick Charles Duke of Cambridge

5 Randall Thomas Archbishop of Canterbury

6 Hardinge Stanley Earl of Halsbury *Lord High Chancellor*

7 William Dalrymple Archbishop of York

8 Charles Steward Earl VANE. (*Marquess of Londonderry*). *Lord President of the Council.*

9 James Edward Hubert Marquess of Salisbury, *Lord Privy Seal.*

10 Henry Duke of Norfolk, *Earl Marshal of England*

11 Algernon Duke of Somerset

12 Charles Henry Duke of Richmond

13 Augustus Charles Lennox Duke of Grafton

14 Henry Adelbert Wellington Fitzroy Duke of Beaufort

15 Charles Victor Albert Aubrey de Vere Duke of St. Albans

16 George Godolphin Duke of Leeds

17 Herbrand Arthur Duke of Bedford

18 Spencer Compton Duke of Devonshire.

19 Charles Richard John Duke of Marlborough

20 John James Robert Duke of Rutland

21 Alfred Douglas Duke of Brandon

22 William John Arthur Charles James Duke of Portland

23 William Angus Drogo Duke of Manchester

24 Henry Pelham Archibald Douglas Duke of Newcastle

25 Henry George Duke of Northumberland

26 His Royal Highness Ernest Augustus William Adolphus George Frederick Duke of Cumberland and Teviotdale

27 Arthur Charles Duke of Wellington

28 Cromartie Duke of Sutherland

29 Hugh Richard Arthur Duke of Westminster

30 Alexander William George Duke of Fife

31 John Douglas Sutherland Duke of Argyll

32 Henry William Montagu Marquess of Winchester

33 Henry Charles Keith Marquess of Lansdowne

34 John James Dudley Stuart Marquess Townshend

35 James Edward Hubert Marquess Salisbury. *In another place as Lord Privy Seal.*)

36 Thomas Henry Marquess of Bath

37 James Marquess of Abercorn (*Duke of Abercorn*)

38 Hugh de Grey Marquess of Hertford

39 John Marquess of Bute

40 William Thomas Brownlow Marquess of Exeter

41 William George Spencer Scott Marquess of Northampton

42 John Charles Marquess Camden

43 Henry Cyril Marquess of Anglesey

44 George Henry Hugh Marquess of Cholmondeley.

45 Henry Augustus Marquess of Ailesbury

46 Frederick William John Marquess of Bristol

47 Archibald Marquess of Ailsa

48 Constantine Charles Henry Marquess of Normanby

49 George Frederick Samuel Marquess of Ripon

50 William Marquess of Abergavenny

51 Gavin Marquess of Breadalbane

52 Terence John Temple Marquess of Dufferin and Ava

53 Lawrence Marquess of Zetland

54 John Adrian Louis Marquess of Linlithgow

55 Sidney Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, *Lord Steward of the Household*

56 Edward Hyde Earl of Clarendon, *Lord Chamberlain of the Household*

57 Charles Henry John Earl of Shrewsbury

58 Frederick Arthur Earl of Derby

59 Warner Francis John Plantagenet Earl of Huntingdon

60 Sidney Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. (*In another place as Lord Steward of the Household*).

61 Charles Pepys Earl of Devon

62 Henry Molyneux Paget Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire

63 Rudolph Robert Basil Aloysius Augustine Earl of Denbigh

64 Anthony Mildmay Julian Earl of Westmorland

65 Montague Peregrine Albemarle Earl of Lindsey

66 William Earl of Stamford

67 Henry Stormont Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham

68 Edwyn Francis Earl of Chesterfield

69 Edward George Henry Earl of Sandwich

70 George Devereux de Vere Earl of Essex

71 George James Earl of Carlisle

72 William Henry Walter Earl of Doncaster. (*Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry*)

73 Anthony Earl of Shaftesbury

74 Randal Mowbray Thomas Earl of Berkeley

75 Montagu Arthur Earl of Abingdon

76 Aldred Frederick George Beresford Earl of Scarborough

77 Arnold Allan Cecil Earl of Albemarle

78 George William Earl of Coventry

79 Victor Albert George Earl of Jersey

80 William John Lydston Earl Poulett

81 John Francis Erskine Earl of Mar. (*Elected for Scotland*)

82 Sholto George Watson Earl of Morton. (*Elected for Scotland*)

83 Walter John Francis Earl of Mar and Kellie. (*Elected for Scotland*)

84 George Earl of Haddington. (*Elected for Scotland*)

85 Frederick Henry Earl of Lauderdale. (*Elected for Scotland*)

86 Robert Harris Carnwath Earl of Carnwath. (*Elected for Scotland*)

87 Ronald Ruthven Earl of Leven and Melville. (*Elected for Scotland*)

88 David John Earl of Northesk. (*Elected for Scotland*)

89 Douglas Mackinnon Baillie Hamilton Earl of Dundonald. (*Elected for Scotland*)

90 Sewallis Edward Earl Ferrers

91 William Heneage Earl of Dartmouth

92 George Montagu Earl of Tankerville

93 Charles Wightwick Earl of Aylesford

94 Francis Thomas De Grey Earl Cowper

95 Arthur Philip Earl Stanhope

96 George Loveden William Henry Earl of Macclesfield

97 Douglas Beresford Malise Ronald Earl Graham. (*Duke of Montrose*)

98 William Frederick Earl Waldegrave

99 Bertram Earl of Ashburnham

100 Charles Augustus Earl of Harrington

101 Newton Earl of Portsmouth

102 Francis Richard Charles Guy Earl Brooke and Earl of Warwick

103 Sidney Carr Earl of Buckinghamshire

104 William Charles De Meuron Earl Fitzwilliam

105 Frederick George Earl of Guilford

106 Albert Edward Philip Henry Earl of Hardwicke

107 Henry Edward Earl of Ilchester

108 Gilbert George Reginald Earl De La Warr

109 Jacob Earl of Radnor

110 John Poyntz Earl Spencer

111 Seymour Henry Earl Bathurst

112 Arthur Wills John Wellington Trumbull Blundell Earl of Hillsborough. (*Marquess of Downshire*)

113 Edward Hyde Earl of Clarendon. (*In another place as Lord Chamberlain of the Household*)

114 William David Earl of Mansfield

115 John James Hugh Henry Earl Strange. (*Duke of Atholl*)

116 William Henry Earl of Mount Edgcumbe

117 Hugh Earl Fortescue

118 George Edward Stanhope Molyneux Earl of Carnarvon

119 George Henry Earl Cadogan

120 James Edward Earl of Malmesbury

121 Anthony Francis Earl of Westmeath. (*Elected for Ireland*)

122 Ponsonby William Earl of Drogheda (*Elected for Ireland*)

123 John Vansittart Danvers Earl of Lanesborough. (*Elected for Ireland*)

124 Dermot Robert Wyndham Earl of Mayo. (*Elected for Ireland*)

125 Hugh Earl Annesley. (*Elected for Ireland*)

126 George Earl of Lucan. (*Elected for Ireland*)

127 Somerset Richard Earl of Belmore (*Elected for Ireland*)

128 James Francis Earl of Bandon. (*Elected for Ireland*)

129 James Francis Harry Earl of Rosslyn

130 William George Robert Earl of Craven

131 William Hillier Earl of Onslow

132 Charles Earl of Romney
133 Francis Godolphin Earl of Chichester
134 Arthur George Earl of Wilton
135 George Charles Earl of Powis
136 Horatio Earl Nelson
137 Lawrence Earl of Rosse. (*Elected for Ireland*)
138 Charles William Sydney Earl Manvers
139 Robert Horace Earl of Orford
140 Albert Henry George Earl Grey
141 Hugh Cecil Earl of Lonsdale
142 John Herbert Dudley Earl of Harrowby
143 Henry Ulick Earl of Harewood
144 Gilbert John Earl of Minto
145 Alan Frederick Earl Cathcart
146 James Walter Earl of Verulam
147 Adelbert Wellington Brownlow Earl Brownlow
148 Henry Cornwallis Earl of St. Germans
149 Albert Edmund Earl of Morley
150 George Cecil Orlando Earl of Bradford
151 William Earl Beauchamp
152 John Earl of Eldon
153 Richard George Penn Earl Howe
154 George Edward John Mowbray Earl of Stradbroke
155 Algernon William Stephen Earl Temple of Stowe
156 Francis Charles Earl of Kilmorey (*Elected for Ireland*)
157 Charles Stewart Earl Vane. (*Marquess of Londonderry.*) *In another place as Lord President of the Council*).
158 William Archer Earl Amherst
159 Frederick Archibald Vaughan Earl Cawdor
160 Aubrey Earl of Munster
161 Robert Adam Philips Haldane Earl of Camperdown
162 Thomas Francis Earl of Lichfield
163 John George Earl of Durham
164 Granville George Earl Granville
165 Henry Alexander Gordon Earl of Effingham
166 Henry John Earl of Ducie
167 Charles Alfred Worsley Earl of Yarborough
168 Henry John Earl Innes. (*Duke of Roxburghe*)
169 Thomas William Earl of Leicester
170 Ralph Gordon Earl of Lovelace
171 Charles William Francis Earl of Gainsborough
172 Francis Charles Granville Earl of Ellesmere
173 Francis Edmund Cecil Earl of Strafford
174 Kenelm Charles Edward Earl of Cottenham
175 Henry Arthur Mornington Earl Cowley
176 George Arnulph Earl of Winton (*Earl of Eglintoun*)
177 William Humble Earl of Dudley
178 John Francis Stanley Earl Russell
179 John Earl of Kimberley
180 Vesey Earl of Dartrey
181 William Ernest Earl of Feversham
182 Atholl Charles Earl of Ravensworth
183 Francis John Earl of Wharncliffe
184 Thomas George Earl of Northbrook
185 Herbert John Earl Cairns
186 Victor Alexander George Robert Earl of Lytton
187 Edward George Earl of Lathom
188 George Edward Earl Sondes
189 William Waldegrave Earl of Selborne
190 Walter Stafford Earl of Iddesleigh
191 Cornwallis Earl de Montalt
192 William Francis Henry Earl of Londesborough
193 Gathorne Earl of Cranbrook
194 Gilbert Henry Earl of Ancaster
195 Charles Robert Earl Carrington
196 Robert Offley Ashburton Earl of Crewe
197 Wilbraham Earl Egerton
198 Hardinge Stanley Earl of Halsbury. (*In another place as Lord High Chancellor*)
199 Frederick Sleigh Earl Roberts
200 Evelyn Earl of Cromer
201 Robert Viscount Hereford
202 Byron Plantagenet Viscount Falkland. (*Elected for Scotland*)
203 ——— Viscount Bolingbroke and St. John

204 Charles George Viscount Cobham
205 Evelyn Edward Thomas Viscount Falmouth
206 George Master Viscount Torrington
207 Maurice Viscount Leinster. (*Duke of Leinster*)
208 Francis Wheler Viscount Hood
209 Mervyn Edward Viscount Powerscourt. (*Elected for Ireland*)
210 Henry William Crosbie Viscount Bangor. (*Elected for Ireland*)
211 Cornwallis Viscount Hawarden. (*Elected for Ireland.*) (*In another place as Earl de Montalt*)
212 Carnegie Parker Viscount St. Vincent
213 Henry Viscount Melville
214 William Wells Viscount Sidmouth
215 Henry Edward Montagu Dorington Clotworthy Viscount Templetown. (*Elected for Ireland*)
216 John Campbell Viscount Gordon. (*Earl of Aberdeen*)
217 Edward Addington Hargreaves. Viscount Exmouth
218 Richard Walter John Viscount Hutchinson. (*Earl of Donoughmore*)
219 William Frederick Viscount Clancarty. (*Earl of Clancarty*)
220 Francis Lynch Wellington Viscount Combermere
221 Henry Charles Viscount Canterbury
222 Rowland Richard Viscount Hill
223 Henry Charles Viscount Hardinge
224 Hugh Viscount Gough
225 Charles Lindley Viscount Halifax
226 Alexander Nelson Viscount Bridport
227 William Henry Berkeley Viscount Portman
228 Henry Robert Viscount Hampden
229 Garnet Joseph Viscount Wolseley
230 Richard Assheton Viscount Cross
231 Arthur Wellesley Viscount Peel
232 Henry Thurstan Viscount Knutsford
233 Henry Viscount Llandaff
234 Reginald Baliol Viscount Esher
235 George Joachim Viscount Goschen
236 Matthew White Viscount Ridley
237 Horatio Herbert Viscount Kitchener of Khartoum and of the Vaal
238 Charles Robert William Viscount Colville of Culross.
239 Victor Albert Francis Charles Viscount Churchill
240 Alfred Viscount Milner
241 Arthur Foley Bishop of London
242 Handley Carr Glyn Bishop of Durham
243 Herbert Edward Bishop of Winchester
244 Charles John Bishop of Gloucester
245 Ernest Roland Bishop of Chichester
246 Richard Bishop of Llandaff
247 George Bishop of Southwell
248 William Boyd Bishop of Ripon
249 Edward Bishop of Lincoln
250 John Bishop of Salisbury
251 Alwyne Bishop of Ely
252 Francis John Bishop of Chester
253 Alfred George Bishop of St. Asaph
254 John Bishop of Truro
255 Angustus Bishop of Lichfield
256 John Wareing Bishop of Carlisle
257 John Bishop of Norwich
258 George Wyndham Bishop of Bath and Wells
259 John Bishop of Hereford
260 Edward Stuart Bishop of Rochester
261 Edgar Bishop of St. Albans
262 Edward Carr Bishop of Peterborough
263 John Bishop of St. David's
264 George Forrest Bishop of Bristol.
265 Dudley Charles Lord de Ros.
266 Charles Botolph Joseph Lord Mowbray
267 George Manners Lord Hastings
268 Jack Southwell Lord de Clifford
269 Charles Henry Rolle Lord Clinton
270 Robert Nathaniel Cecil George Lord Zouche of Haryngworth
271 Rawdon George Grey Lord Grey de Ruthyn
272 Charles Edward Hastings Lord Botreaux. (*Earl of Loudoun*)
273 Ralph Francis Julian Lord Camoys

274 Richard Greville Lord Willoughby de Broke
275 Hubert George Charles Lord Vaux of Harrowden
276 Ralph Gordon Lord Wentworth. (*In another place as Earl of Lovelace*)
277 Alfred Thomas Townshend Lord Braye
278 Robert George Lord Windsor
279 William Henry John Lord North
280 Beauchamp Moubray Lord St. John of Bletso
281 Thomas Evelyn Lord Howard de Walden
282 Bernard Henry Philip Lord Petre
283 John Fiennes Lord Saye and Sele
284 John Francis Lord Arundell of Wardour
285 Ronald John Lord Dormer
286 Henry John Philip Sidney Lord Teynham
287 Fitzherbert Lord Stafford
288 George Frederick William Lord Byron
289 Lewis Henry Hugh Lord Clifford of Chudleigh
290 Henry John Brinsley Lord Manners of Haddon. (*Marquess of Granby*)
291 Henry de Vere Lord Barnard
292 Horace Courtenay Gammell Lord Forbes. (*Elected for Scotland*)
293 Alexander William Frederick Lord Saltoun. (*Elected for Scotland*)
294 Charles William Lord Sinclair. (*Elected for Scotland*)
295 James Walter Lord Torphichen. (*Elected for Scotland*)
296 Alexander Hugh Lord Balfour of Burley. (*Elected for Scotland*)
297 Alexander Charles Lord Belhaven and Stenton. (*Elected for Scotland*)
298 Richard Edmund St. Lawrence Lord Boyle. (*Earl of Cork and Orrery*)
299 Archibald Fitzroy George Lord Hay. (*Earl of Kinnoul*)
300 Digby Wentworth Bayard Lord Middleton
301 Augustus Debonnaire John Lord Monson
302 Walter William Brabazon Lord Ponsonby. (*Earl of Bessborough*)
303 Alfred Nathaniel Holden Lord Scarsdale
304 George Florance Lord Boston
305 Augustus Arthur Lord Lovel and Holland. (*Earl of Egmont*)
306 George Francis Augustus Lord Vernon
307 Edward Henry Trafalgar Lord Digby
308 Martin Bladen Lord Hawke
309 Henry Thomas Lord Foley
310 Arthur de Cardonnel Lord Dinevor
311 Thomas Lord Walsingham
312 William Lord Bagot
313 Charles Henry Lord Southampton
314 John Richard Brinsley Lord Grantley
315 George Bridges Harley Dennett Lord Rodney
316 Arthur Herbert Tennyson Lord Somers
317 Richard Henry Lord Berwick
318 Edward Lennox Lord Sherborne
319 Henry De La Poer Lord Tyrone (*Marquess of Waterford*)
320 Richard Henry Lord Carleton. (*Earl of Shannon*)
321 Charles Lord Suffield
322 Lloyd Lord Kenyon
323 Henry Lord Braybrooke
324 George Augustus Hamilton Lord Fisherwick. (*Marquess of Donegall*)
325 Henry Charles Lord Gage. (*Viscount Gage*)
326 Thomas John Lord Thurlow
327 William Morton Lord Auckland
328 Thomas Charles Lord Mendip, (*Viscount Clifden*)
329 Francis James Lord Stuart of Castle Stuart. (*Earl of Moray*)
330 Randolph Henry Lord Stewart of Garlies. (*Earl of Galloway*)
331 James George Henry Lord Saltersford. (*Earl of Courtown*)
332 William Lord Brodrick. (*Viscount Midleton*)
333 Augustus Cholmondeley Lord Calthorpe

334 Peter Robert Lord Gwydir
335 William Thomas Lord Bolton
336 John Lord Lilford
337 Thomas Lord Ribblesdale
338 Robert St. John FitzWalter Lord Dunboyne. (*Elected for Ireland*)
339 Lucius William Lord Inchiquin. (*Elected for Ireland*)
340 John Thomas William Lord Massy. (*Elected for Ireland*)
341 Hamilton Matthew Fitzmaurice Lord Muskerry. (*Elected for Ireland*)
342 Francis William Lord Kilmaine. (*Elected for Ireland*)
343 Luke Gerald Lord Clonbrock. (*Elected for Ireland*)
344 Charles Mark Lord Headley. (*Elected for Ireland*)
345 Edward Henry Churchill Lord Crofton. (*Elected for Ireland*)
346 Hercules Edward Lord Langford (*Elected for Ireland*)
347 Dayrolles Blakeney Lord Ventry. (*Elected for Ireland*)
348 Henry O'Callaghan Lord Dunalley. (*Elected for Ireland*)
349 John Henry Lord Loftus. (*Marquess of Ely*)
350 William Lord Carysfort. (*Earl of Carysfort*)
351 George Ralph Lord Abercromby
352 Edward Downes Lord Ellenborough
353 Augustus Frederick Arthur Lord Sandys
354 Henry North Lord Sheffield. (*Earl of Sheffield*)
355 William Macnaghten Lord Erskine
356 Henry Ulick Lord Monteagle (*Marquess of Sligo*)
357 Bernard Arthur William Patrick Hastings Lord Granard. (*Earl of Granard*)
358 ——————— Lord Gardner
359 John Thomas Lord Manners
360 Albert Edward Lord Castlemaine. (*Elected for Ireland*)
361 Charles Lord Meldrum. (*Marquess of Huntly*)
362 Lowry Egerton Lord Grinstead. (*Earl of Enniskillen*)
363 William Henry Edmond de Vere Sheaffe Lord Foxford. (*Earl of Limerick*)
364 George Robert Canning Lord Harris
365 Reginald Charles Edward Lord Colchester
366 Robert Schomberg Lord Ker. (*Marquess of Lothian*)
367 Victor George Henry Francis Lord Minster. (*Marquess Conyngham*)
368 James Edward William Theobald Lord Ormonde. (*Marquess of Ormonde*)
369 Francis Richard Lord Wemyss. (*Earl of Wemyss*)
370 Thomas Lord Silchester. (*Earl of Longford*)
371 Clotworthy John Eyre Lord Oriel (*Viscount Massereene*)
372 Hugh Lord Delamere
373 Cecil Theodore Lord Forester
374 John William Lord Rayleigh
375 Edric Frederic Lord Gifford
376 Hubert George Lord Somerhill. (*Marquess of Clanricarde*)
377 James Ludovic Lord Wigan. (*Earl of Crawford*)
378 Uchter John Mark Lord Ranfurly. (*Earl of Ranfurly*)
379 Charles Stuart Henry Lord Tenterden
380 William Lee Lord Plunket
381 Leonard Lord Heytesbury
382 Archibald Philip Lord Rosebery. (*Earl of Rosebery*)
383 Richard James Lord Clanwilliam. (*Earl of Clanwilliam*)
384 George Lord Wynford
385 Charles Gore Lord Kilmarnock. (*Earl of Erroll*)
386 Arthur James Francis Lord Fingall. (*Earl of Fingall*)
387 Osbert Cecil Lord Sefton. (*Earl of Sefton*)
388 Charles Lord Clements. (*Earl of Leitrim*)
389 Geoffrey Thomas Lord Kenlis. (*Marquess of Headfort*)
390 Reginald Lord Chaworth. (*Earl of Meath*)

391 Charles Adolphus Lord Dunmore. (*Earl of Dunmore*)
392 Augustus Frederick George Warwick Lord Poltimore
393 Llewelyn Nevill Vaughan Lord Mostyn
394 Henry Spencer Lord Templemore
395 Valentine Frederick Lord Cloncurry
396 James St. Vincent Lord de Saumarez
397 Thomas Lord Denman
398 Shelley Leopold Laurence Lord Abinger
399 Philip Lord De L'Isle and Dudley
400 Francis Denzil Edward Lord Ashburton
401 Edward George Percy Lord Hatherton
402 Archibald Brabazon Sparrow Lord Worlingham. (*Earl of Gosford*)
403 Hallyburton George Lord Strathеden
404 Geoffrey Henry Browne Lord Oranmore and Browne. (*Elected for Ireland*)
405 Simon Joseph Lord Lovat
406 William Spencer Lord Bateman
407 Algernon Hawkins Thomond Lord Kintore. (*Earl of Kintore*)
408 Derrick Warner William Lord Rossmore
409 Robert Shapland George Julian Lord Carew
410 William Ashley Webb Lord De Mauley
411 Arthur Lord Wrottesley
412 Charles Douglas Richard Lord Sudeley
413 Paul Sanford Lord Methuen
414 Edward Lyulph Lord Stanley of Alderley
415 William Henry Lord Leigh
416 Beilby Lord Wenlock
417 William Lord Lurgan
418 Thomas Spring Lord Monteagle of Brandon
419 John Reginald Upton Lord Seaton
420 John Hew North Gustave Henry Lord Oxenfoord. (*Earl of Stair*)
421 George Crespigny Brabazon Lord Vivian
422 Henry Lord Congleton
423 Victor Alexander Lord Elgin. (*Earl of Elgin and Kincardine*)
424 Arthur Lord de Freyne
425 Edward Burtenshaw Lord Saint Leonards
426 George Fitz-Roy Henry Lord Raglan
427 Valentine Augustus Lord Kenmare. (*Earl of Kenmare*)
428 Henry Lord Belper
429 Richard Wogan Lord Talbot de Malahide
430 Robert Wellesley Lord Ebury
431 Charles Compton William Lord Chesham
432 Frederic Augustus Lord Chelmsford
433 John Lord Churston
434 Charles Henry Lord Leconfield
435 Godfrey Charles Lord Tredegar
436 Courtenay Robert Percy Lord Lyveden
437 Henry Charles Lord Brougham and Vaux
438 Arthur Fitz-Gerald Lord Kinnaird
439 Richard Luttrell Pilkington Lord Westbury
440 Charles Paget Fitzhardinge Lord Fitzhardinge
441 Luke Lord Annaly
442 John Gaspard Le Marchant Lord Romilly
443 James Herbert Gustavus Meredyth Lord Meredyth. (*Lord Athlumney*)
444 Windham Thomas Lord Kenry. (*Earl of Dunraven and Mount-Earl*)
445 Henry Power Charles Stanley Lord Monck. (*Viscount Monck*)
446 Charles Henry Chandos Lord Hartismere. (*Lord Henniker*)
447 Hylton George Hylton Lord Hylton
448 George Sholto Gordon Lord Penrhyn
449 Gustavus Russell Lord Brancepeth. (*Viscount Boyne*)
450 John Henry Lord Kesteven
451 Arthur Lord Ormathwaite

452 Edward Lord O'Neill
453 Robert William Lord Napier
454 Jenico William Joseph Lord Gormanston. (*Viscount Gormanston*)
455 Thomas Kane Lord Rathdonnell. (*Elected for Ireland*)
456 John Hamilton Lord Lawrence
457 John Lord Dunning. (*Lord Rollo*)
458 James Lord Balinhard. (*Earl of Southesk*)
459 William Lord Hare. (*Earl of Listowel*)
460 Francis Edward Lord Howard of Glossop
461 Bernard Edward Barnaby Lord Castletown
462 Richard Maximilian Lord Acton
463 Frederick Lord Wolverton
464 Algernon William Fulke Lord Greville
465 Maurice Herbert Ignatius Towneley Lord O'Hagan
466 William Lord Sandhurst
467 William John George Lord Ettrick. (*Lord Napier*)
468 Sidney James Lord Somerton. (*Earl of Normanton*)
469 Henry Campbell Lord Aberdare
470 Henry James Lord Moncrieff
471 Bernard John Seymour Lord Coleridge
472 Thomas William Gaston Lord Emly
473 Thomas Francis Lord Cottesloe
474 Herbert Perrott Murray Lord Hampton
475 Charles Alexander Lord Douglas. (*Earl of Home*)
476 Arthur George Maule Lord Ramsey (*Earl of Dalhousie*)
477 John Henry Lord Fermanagh. (*Earl Erne*)
478 William Richard Lord Harlech
479 Henry Gerard Lord Alington
480 Wilbraham Frederic Lord Tollemache
481 Frederick John Lord Gerard
482 Lionel Sackville Lord Sackville
483 Charles Bowyer Lord Norton
484 Walter Bulkeley Lord Shute. (*Viscount Barrington*)
485 Lawrence William Lord Haldon
486 Ivor Bertie Lord Wimborne
487 Arthur Edward Lord Ardilaun
488 Charles Wallace Alexander Napier Lord Lamington
489 Arthur William Lord Trevor
490 Edward Lord Brabourne
491 Arthur Oliver Villiers Lord Ampthill
492 William Montagu Lord Tweeddale. (*Marquess of Tweeddale*)
493 William Ulick Tristram Lord Howth. (*Earl of Howth*)
494 Donald James Lord Reay
495 Harcourt Lord Derwent
496 Henry James Lord Hothfield
497 Edward Lord Tweedmouth
498 Hallam Lord Tennyson
499 James Lord Strathspey. (*Earl of Seafield*)
500 John William Lord Monk Bretton
501 Walter Henry Lord Northbourne
502 Arthur Jocelyn Charles Lord Sudley. (*Earl of Arran*)
503 Marmaduke Francis Lord Herries
504 Mervyn Edward Lord Powerscourt. (*In another place as Viscount Powerscourt*)
505 Frederick Lord Northington. (*Lord Henley*)
506 Nathaniel Mayer Lord Rothschild
507 John Lord Revelstoke
508 Robert Lord Monkswell
509 Arthur Lord Hobhouse
510 Ralph Robert Wheeler Lord Lingen
511 Edward Lord Ashbourne
512 Rowland Lord Saint Oswald
513 Robert Wilfrid Lord Deramore
514 Henry John Lord Montagu of Beaulieu
515 Sidney Herbert Lord Elphinstone
516 Richard Farrer Lord Herschell
517 Charles William Lord Hillingdon
518 Charles Lord Hindlip
519 Edmund Lord Grimthorpe

520 Richard de Aquila Lord Stalbridge
521 Hugh Lord Kensington
522 Michael Arthur Lord Burton
523 Gavin George Lord Hamilton of Dalzell
524 Thomas Lord Brassey
525 Henry Lord Thring
526 Edward Lord Macnaghten. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
527 Claude Lord Bowes. (*Earl of Strathmore and Kinghorn*)
528 George Edmund Milnes Lord Monckton. (*Viscount Galway*)
529 John Lord Saint Levan
530 Dudley Stuart Lord Magheramorne
531 George Limbrey Lord Basing
532 William Henry Lord de Ramsey
533 Herbert Francis Lord Cheylesmore
534 Egerton Lord Addington
535 John Savile Lord Savile
536 William Ventris Lord Field
537 Edward Cecil Lord Iveagh
538 George Lord Mount Stephen
539 Samuel Lord Masham
540 William Lord Kelvin
541 Alexander Burns Lord Shand
542 George Lord Ashcombe
543 Archibald Campbell Lord Blythswood
544 Thomas Lord Crawshaw
545 William Amhurst Lord Amherst of Hackney
546 Thomas Wodehouse Lord Newton
547 Henry Lyle Lord Dunleath
548 John Allan Lord Llangattock
549 George James Lord Playfair
550 Cyril Lord Battersea
551 Ernest Ambrose Lord Swansea
552 Thomas Cecil Lord Farrer
553 John Campbell Lord Overtoun
554 Cecil George Savile Lord Hawkesbury
555 Arthur Lord Stanmore
556 Stuart Lord Rendel
557 Reginald Earle Lord Welby
558 Horace Lord Davey. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
559 Edward Douglas Lord Loch
560 Sydney James Lord Wandsworth
561 James Lord Ashton
562 Herbert Coulstoun Lord Burghclere
563 Henry Lord James
564 David Robert Lord Rathmore
565 Algernon Lord Glenesk
566 Henry Hucks Lord Aldenham
567 Edward Lord Heneage
568 Hercules Arthur Temple Lord Rosmead
569 Alexander Smith Lord Kinnear
570 Joseph Lord Lister
571 David Lord Fairlie. (*Earl of Glasgow*)
572 Hugh Richard Lord Dawnay. (*Viscount Downe*)
573 Henry Ludlow Lord Ludlow
574 Hans Wellesley Lord Holm Patrick
575 George Arbuthnot Lord Inverclyde
576 Donald Alexander Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal
577 William Wallace Lord Newlands
578 Horace Brand Lord Farquhar
579 Josslyn Francis Lord Muncaster
580 Arthur Lawrence Lord Haliburton
581 Philip Henry Wodehouse Lord Currie
582 Joseph Russell Lord Glanusk
583 Henry Lord Brampton
584 Bertram Francis Lord Cranworth
585 James Patrick Bannerman Lord Robertson. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)
586 Henry Stafford Lord Northcote
587 John Lord Avebury
588 Nathaniel Lord Lindley. (*A Lord of Appeal in Ordinary*)

589 Martin Henry Lord Killanin.
590 Peter Lord O'Brien
591 Richard Everard Lord Alverstone
592 John Blair Lord Kinross
593 Ughtred James Lord Shuttleworth
594 William Lawies Lord Allerton
595 Arthur Hugh Lord Barrymore
596 Francis Wallace Lord Grenfell
597 Francis Lord Knollys
598 Algernon Bertram Lord Redesdale
599 Edward Levy Lord Burnham.
600 Michael Lord Biddulph.
601 George Thomas John Lord Estcourt
602* William Henry Armstrong Fitz-Patrick Lord Armstrong.

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* This number is in excess of the total Number of Lords Spiritual and Temporal, the Discrepancy being caused by the following Lords being twice named in the Roll:

Earl of Halsbury as Lord High Chancellor and as Earl of Halsbury (Nos. 6 and 198)

Earl Vane (Marquess of Londonderry) as Lord President and as Earl Vane (Marquess of Londonderry). (Nos. 8 and 157.)

Marquess of Salisbury as Lord Privy Seal and as Marquess of Salisbury. (Nos. 9 and 35.)

Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery as Lord Steward and as Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery (Nos. 55 and 60)

Earl of Clarendon as Lord Chamberlain and as Earl of Clarendon (Nos. 56 and 113)

Earl of Lovelace as Earl of Lovelace and as Lord Wentworth (Nos. 170 and 276)

Earl de Montalt as Earl de Montalt and as Viscount Hawarden (Nos. 191 and 211)

Viscount Powerscourt as Viscount Powerscourt and as Lord Powerscourt (Nos. 209 and 504)

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

IN THE

FIFTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF
THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND
AND THE FOURTH OF KING EDWARD VII.

(Compiled at the Opening of the Session.)

A

Abraham, William (Glamorgan, Rhondda)
Abraham, William (Cork Co., N.E.)
Acland-Hood, Captain Sir A., Bt. (Somerset, Wellington)
Agg-Gardner, James T. (Cheltenham)
Agnew, Sir Andrew N., Bt. (Edinburgh, South)
Ainsworth, John S. (Argyll)
Aird, Sir John (Paddington, N.)
Allen, Charles P. (Gloucester, Stroud)
Allhusen, Aug. Henry E. (Hackney, Central)
Allsopp, Hon. George H. (Worcester)
Ambrose, Robert (Mayo, West)
Anson, Sir William R., Bt. (Oxford University)
Arkwright, John S. (Hereford)
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O. (Belfast, West)
Arrol, Sir William (Ayrshire, South)
Asher, Alexander (Elgin Burghs)
Ashton, Thomas Gair (Beds., Luton)
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H. (Fife, East)
Atherley-Jones, Llewellyn (Durham, N.W.)
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John (Londonderry, North)
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H. (Sussex, Lewes)
Austin, Sir John, Bt. (York, W.R., Osgoldcross)

B

Bagot, Captain Josceline F. (Westmoreland, Kendal)
Bailey, James (Newington, Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert (Cumberland, Egremont)
Baird, John G. A. (Glasgow, Central)
Balcarres, Lord (Lancashire, Chorley)
Baldwin, Alfred (Worcester, Bewdley)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. Arthur J. (Manchester, East)
Balfour, Captain Charles B. (Middlesex, Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald William (Leeds, Central)
Balfour, K. R. (Christchurch)
Banbury, Sir Fred. George (Camberwell, Peckham)
Banes, Major George E. (West Ham, South)
Barlow, John Emmott (Somerset, Frome)
Barran, Rowland Hirst (Leeds, North)
Barry, Edward (Cork Co., South)
Barry, Sir Francis Tress, Bt. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T. (Islington, N.)
Bathurst, Hon. Allen B. (Gloucester, Cirencester)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire, Chesterfield)
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. Hicks, Bt. (Bristol, W.)

Beaumont, Wentworth C. B. (Northumberland, Hexham)
Beckett, Ernest W. (York, N.R., Whitby)
Bell, Richard (Derby)
Bentinck, Lord Henry C. (Nottingham, S.)
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M. (Bethnal Green, N.E.)
Bignold, A. (Wick Burghs)
Bigwood, James (Middlesex, Brentford)
Bill, Charles (Staffordshire, Leek)
Black, Alexander W. (Banffshire)
Blake, Edward (Longford, S.)
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H. (Lancashire, Ince)
Boland, John (Kerry, South)
Bolton, Thomas Dolling (Derbyshire, N. East)
Bond, Edward (Nottingham, E.)
Boscawen, Capt. A. S. T. Griffith (Kent, Tunbridge)
Boulnois, Edmund (Marylebone, E.)
Bousfield, William R. (Hackney, N.)
Bowles, Colonel Henry F. (Middlesex, Enfield)
Bowles, Thomas Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brand, Hon. Arthur G. (Cambridge, Wisbech)
Brassey, Albert (Oxon, Banbury)
Brigg, John (York, W.R., Keighley)
Broadhurst, Henry (Leicester)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. W. St. John F. (Surrey, Guildford)
Brotherton, Edward Allen (Wakefield)
Brown, Sir Alex. Hargreaves (Shropshire, Wellington)
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh, Central)
Brunner, Sir John T., Bt. (Cheshire, Northwich)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James (Aberdeen, South)
Brymer, Col. W. Ernest (Dorset, South)
Buchanan, Thomas R. (Perthshire, E.)
Bull, William James (Hammersmith)
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. A. B. (Westminster)
Burke, E. Haviland (King's County, Tullamore)
Burns, John (Battersea)
Burt, Thomas (Morpeth)
Butcher, John George (York)
Buxton, Sydney Charles (Tower Hamlets, Poplar)

C

Caldwell, James (Lanark, Mid.)
Cameron, Robert (Durham, Houghton-le-Spring)
Campbell, Rt. Hon. James A. (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities)
Campbell, J. (Armagh, South)
Campbell, James H. M. (Dublin University)
Campbell-Bannerman, Rt. Hon. Sir H. (Stirling Burghs)
Carlile, William Walter (Bucks, N.)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward H. (Dublin University)
Carvill, Patrick G. H. (Newry)
Causton, Richard Knight (Southwark, West)
Cautley, Henry S. (Leeds, East)
Cavendish, Richard F. (Lancashire, North Lonsdale)
Cavendish, Victor C. W. (Derbyshire, West)
Cawley, Frederick (Lancs, Prestwich)
Cayzer, Sir Charles W. (Barrow-in-Furness)
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh Richard H. (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birmingham, W.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. Austen (Worcestershire, East)
Chamberlayne, T. (Southampton)
Channing, Francis A. (Northampton, East)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry (Lincolnshire, Sleaford)
Chapman, Edward (Cheshire, Hyde)
Charrington, Spencer (Tower Hamlets, Mile End)
Churchill, Winston L. S. (Oldham)
Clancy, John J. (Dublin Co., North)
Clare, Octavius Leigh (Lancashire, Eccles)
Clive, Capt. Percy Archer (Herefordshire, Ross)
Coates, Major E. F. (Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. (Ayrshire, North)
Coddington, Sir William, Bt. (Blackburn)
Cogan, Denis J. (Wicklow, East)
Coghill, Douglas H. (Stoke-upon-Trent)
Cohen, Benjamin L. (Islington, E.)
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse (Birmingham, Bordesley)
Colomb, Sir John C. R. (Great Yarmouth)

Colston, Charles Edward H. A. (Gloucester, Thornbury)

Compton, Lord Alwyne F. (Beds, Biggleswade)

Condon, Thomas J. (Tipperary, E.)

Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas, Bt. (Lambeth, Kennington)

Corbett, Arch. Cameron (Glasgow, Tradeston)

Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)

Cox, Irwin Edward B. (Middlesex, Harrow)

Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, South)

Craig, R. Hunter (Lanark, Govan)

Crean, Eugene (Cork, S.E.)

Cremer, William R. (Shoreditch, Haggerston)

Cripps, Charles A. (Lancashire, Stretford)

Crombie, John William (Kincardineshire)

Crooks, William (Woolwich)

Cross, Alexander (Glasgow, Camlachie)

Cross, Herbert Shepherd (Bolton)

Crossley, Sir Savile B., Bt. (Halifax)

Cubitt, Hon. Henry (Surrey, Reigate)

Cullinan, J. (Tipperary, South)

Cust, Henry J. C. (Southwark, Bermondsey)

D

Dalkeith, Earl of (Roxburgh)

Dalrymple, Sir Charles, Bt. (Ipswich)

Dalziel, James H. (Kirkcaldy Burghs)

Davenport, William Bromley (Cheshire, Macclesfield)

Davies, A. (Carmarthen Boroughs)

Davies, Col. Sir Horatio David (Chatham)

Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)

Delany, William (Queen's Co., Ossory)

Denny, Colonel John M. (Kilmarnock Burghs)

Delvin, Charles R. (Galway)

Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, North)

Dewar, John A. (Inverness)

Dewar, Sir Thomas R. (Tower Hamlets, St. George's)

Dickinson, Robert E. (Somerset, Wells)

Dickson, Charles Scott (Glasgow Bridgton)

Dickson-Poynder, Sir J., Bt. (Wilts, Chippenham)

Digby, John Kenelm Wingfield- (Dorset North)

Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir C. W., Bt. (Gloucester, Forest of Dean)

Dillon, John (Mayo, East)

Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C. (London)

Disraeli, Coningsby R. (Cheshire, Altrincham)

Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. D., Bt. (Middlesex, Uxbridge)

Dobbie, John (Ayr Burghs)

Donelan, Captain A. J. C. (Cork, East)

Doogan, P. C. (Tyrone, East)

Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir John E., Bt. (Gloucester, Tewkesbury)

Doughty, George (Great Grimsby)

Douglas, Rt. Hon. Aretas Akers (Kent, St. Augustine's)

Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark, North-West)

Doxford, Sir William T. (Sunderland)

Duffy, William J. (Galway, South)

Duke, H. E. (Plymouth)

Duncan, James H. (Yorks, W.R., Otley)

Dunn, Sir William, Bt. (Paisley)

Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin, Bt. (Cornwall, Truro)

Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H., Bt. (Kent, Dartford)

E

Edwards, Frank (Radnor)

Egerton, Hon. Alan de Tatton (Cheshire, Knutsford)

Elibank, Master of (Edinburgh, Midlothian)

Ellice, Captain Edward C. (St. Andrews Burghs)

Elliot, Hon. Arthur R. D. (Durham)

Ellis, John Edward (Nottingham, Rush cliffe)

Emmott, Alfred (Oldham)

Esmonde, Sir T. Grattan, Bt. (Wexford, North)

Evans, Sir Francis H. (Maidstone)

Evans, Samuel Thomas (Glamorgan, Mid)

Eve, H. Trelawney (Devon, Ashburton)

F

Faber, E. Beckett (Hants, Andover)

Faber, G. Denison (York)

Fardell, Sir T. George (Paddington, S.)

Farquharson, Dr. Robert (Aberdeenshire, West)

Farrell, James P. (Longford, North)

Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn E. (Hunts, Ramsey)

Fenwick, Charles (Northumberland, Wansbeck)

Ferguson, Ronald C. Munro (Leith Burghs)

Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J., Bt. (Manchester, N.E.)

Ffrench, Peter (Wexford, South)

Field, William (Dublin, St. Patrick)

Fielden, Edward B. (Lancashire, Middleton)

Finch, Rt. Hon. George H. (Rutland)

Finlay, Sir Robert B. (Inverness Burghs)

Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas (Hull, East)

Fisher, William Hayes (Fulham)

Fison, Frederick William (York, W.R., Doncaster)

FitzGerald, Sir Robert U. P., Bt. (Cambridge)

Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond G. Petty (Wilts, Cricklade)

Fitzroy, Hon. E. Algernon (Northants, South)

Flannery, Sir J. Fortescue (Yorkshire, Shipley)

Flavin, Michael Joseph (Kerry, North)

Flower, Sir Ernest F. S. (Bradford, W.)

Flynn, James C. (Cork, North)

Forster, Henry W. (Kent, Sevenoaks)

Foster, Sir Michael (London University)

Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon)

Foster, Sir B. Walter (Derby, Ilkeston)

Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir H. H. (Wolverhampton, East)

Freeman-Thomas, F. (Hastings)

Fuller, J. M. F. (Wilts, Westbury)

Furness, Sir Christopher, Bt. (Hartlepool)

Fyler, John A. (Surrey, Chertsey)

G

Galloway, William Johnson (Manchester, S.W.)

Gardner, Ernest (Berks, Wokingham)

Garfit, William (Boston)

Gibbs, Hon. Alban George H. (London)

Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (Herts, St. Albans)

Gilhooly, James (Cork Co., West)

Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert J. (Leeds, West)

Goddard, Daniel Ford (Ipswich)

Godson, Sir Augustus F. (Kidderminster)

Gordon, Hon. John Edwin (Elgin and Nairn)

Gordon, John (Londonderry, S.)

Gordon, Major W. E. (Tower Hamlets, Stepney)

Gore, Hon. C. R. C. Ormsby- (Shropshire, Oswestry)

Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby- (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough)

Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon (Cambridge University)

Goschen, Hon. George J. (Sussex, East Grinstead)

Goulding, Edward A. (Wilts, Devizes)

Graham, Henry R. (St. Pancras, West)

Grant, Corrie (Warwickshire, Rugby)

Gray, Ernest (West Ham, North)

Green, Walford Davis (Wednesbury)

Greene, Sir E. Walter, Bt. (Bury St. Edmunds)

Greene, Henry David (Shrewsbury)

Greene, Walter Raymond (Cambs., Chesterton)

Grenfell, Major William H. (Bucks, Wycombe)

Gretton, John (Derbyshire, South)

Greville, Capt. Hon. Ronald H. F. (Bradford, East)

Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward, Bt. (Northumberland, Berwick)

Griffith, Ellis J. (Anglesey)

Groves, James G. (Salford, South)

Guest, Hon. Ivor C. (Plymouth)

Gully, Rt. Hon. W. C. (Carlisle)

Gunter, Col. Sir Robert, Bt. (York, W.R., Barkstone Ash)

Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton (Norfolk, North)

Guthrie, Walter Murray (Tower Hamlets, Bow, etc.)

H

Hain, Edward (Cornwall, St. Ives)
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B. (Haddington)
Hall, E. Marshall (Lancashire, Southport)
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F. (Herts, Watford)
Hambro, C. Eric (Surrey, Wimbledon)
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George (Middlesex, Ealing)
Hamilton, Marquess of (Londonderry)
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir W. G. Vernon (Monmouthshire, W.)
Hardie, James Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas L. (Norfolk, S.W.)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester (Caithness)
Harrington, Timothy (Dublin, Harbour)
Harris, Frederick L. (Tynemouth)
Harris, Dr. F. Rutherford (Camberwell, Dulwich)
Harwood, George (Bolton)
Haslam, Sir Alfred Seale (Newcastle-under-Lyne)
Haslett, Sir James H. (Belfast, North)
Hatch, Ernest F. George (Lancashire, Gorton)
Hay, Hon. Claude G. D. (Shoreditch, Hoxton)
Hayden, John P. (Roscommon, South)
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir A. D., Bt. (Walsall)
Healy, Timothy M. (Louth, North)
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)
Heath, James (Staffordshire, N.W.)
Heaton, J. Henniker (Canterbury)
Helder, Augustus (Whitehaven)
Helme, Norval W. (Lancashire, Lancaster)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C. Hare (Tyrone, North)
Henderson, Sir Alexander (Staffordshire, West)
Henderson, Arthur (Durham, Barnard Castle)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T. (Oxon, Henley)
Hickman, Sir Alfred (Wolverhampton, West)
Hill, Capt. Arthur (Down, West)
Hoare, Sir Samuel, Bt. (Norwich)
Hobhouse, Charles E. H. (Bristol, East)
Hobhouse, Rt. Hon. Henry (Somerset, East)
Hogg, Lindsay (Sussex, Eastbourne)
Holland, Sir William H. (York, W.R., Rotherham)
Hope, J. D. (Fife, West)
Hope, J. Fitzalan (Sheffield, Brightside)
Hornby, Sir William Henry, Bt. (Blackburn)
Horner, Frederick W. (Lambeth, North)
Horniman, Frederick John (Penryn and Falmouth)
Houldsworth, Sir W. Henry, Bt. (Manchester, N.W.)
Hoult, Joseph (Cheshire, Wirral)
Houston, Robert P. (Liverpool, West Toxteth)
Howard, Capt. J. (Kent, Faversham)
Howard, Joseph (Middlesex, Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. James H. C. (Lanark, South)
Hudson, George B. (Herts, Hitchin)
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C. (Montgomery)
Hunt, Rowland (Shropshire, Ludlow)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles F. (Sussex, Rye)
Hutton, Alfred E. (York, W.R., Morley)
Hutton, John (Yorkshire, Richmond)

J

Jacoby, James Alfred (Derbyshire, Mid)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace (Clare, West)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse (Cambridge University)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur F. (Hants, North)
Jessel, Captain Herbert M. (St. Pancras, South)
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnstone, John Heywood (Sussex, Horsham)
Joicey, Sir James, Bt. (Durham, Chester-le-street)
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea District)
Jones, William (Carnarvon, Arfon)
Jordan, Jeremiah (Fermanagh, South)
Joyce, M. (Limerick)

K

Kearley, Hudson E. (Devonport)

Kemp, George (Lancashire, Heywood)

Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H., Bt. (Devon, Honiton)

Kennedy, Patrick J. (Westmeath, North)

Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (Denbigh)

Kenyon-Slaney, Colonel Wm. (Shropshire, Newport)

Kerr, John (Preston)

Keswick, William (Surrey, Epsom)

Kilbridge, Dennis (Kildare, S.)

Kimber, Henry (Wandsworth)

King, Sir H. Seymour (Hull, Central)

Kitson, Sir James, Bt. (York, W.R., Colne Valley)

Knowles, Sir Lees (Salford, West)

L

Labouchere, Henry (Northampton)

Lambert, George (Devon, South Molton)

Lambton, Hon. F. W. (Durham, South East)

Langley, Batty (Sheffield, Attercliffe)

Laurie, Lieut.-Gen. John W. (Pembroke and Haverfordwest)

Law, Andrew B. (Glasgow, Blackfriars)

Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, West)

Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monmouth Boroughs)

Lawrence, William F. (Liverpool, Abercromby)

Lawson, John Grant (York, N.R., Thirsk)

Lawson, Sir Wilfred, Bt. (Cornwall, Camborne)

Layland-Barratt, F. (Devon, Torquay)

Leamy, Edmund (Kildare, North)

Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham)

Lees, Sir Elliott, Bt. (Birkenhead)

Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Lancashire, Accrington)

Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage (St. George's, Hanover Square)

Leigh, Sir Joseph (Stockport)

Leng, Sir John (Dundee)

Leveson-Gower, F. S. (Sutherland)

Levy, M. (Leicestershire, Loughborough)

Lewis, John Herbert (Flint Boroughs)

Llewellyn, Evan Henry (Somerset, North)

Lloyd-George, David (Carnarvon, etc.)

Lockie, John (Devonport)

Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. Amelius (Essex, Epping)

Loder, Gerald W. E. (Brighton)

Logan, John William (Leicester, Harborough)

Long, Col. Charles W. (Worcestershire, Evesham)

Long, Rt. Hon. Walter H. (Bristol, South)

Lonsdale, John B. (Armagh, Mid.)

Lough, Thomas (Islington, W.)

Lowe, Francis W. (Birmingham, Edgbaston)

Lowther, Claude N. W. (Cumberland, Eskdale)

Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent, Thanet)

Lowther, Rt. Hon. James William (Cumberland, Penrith)

Loyd, Archie Kirkman (Berks, Abingdon)

Lucas, Col. Francis A. (Suffolk, Lowestoft)

Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)

Lundon, W. (Limerick, East)

Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred (Warwick and Leamington)

M

Macdona, J. Cumming (Southwark, Rotherhithe)

MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A. (Queen's County, Leix)

MacIver, David (Liverpool, Kirkdale)

Macnamara, Thomas J. (Camberwell, North)

MacNeill, J. G. Swift (Donegal, South)

Maconochie, A. W. (Aberdeenshire, East)

MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, South)

McArthur, Charles (Liverpool, Exchange)

McArthur, William A. (Cornwall, St. Austell)

McCalmont, Colonel James (Antrim, East)

McCann, J. (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green)

McCrae, George (Edinburgh, East)

McFadden, Edward (Donegal, East)

McGovern, T. (Cavan, West)

M'Hugh, Patrick A. (Leitrim, North)

McIver, Sir Lewis, Bt. (Edinburgh, West)

M'Kean, John (Monaghan, South)

McKenna, Reginald (Monmouth, North)

M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)

McKillop, W. (Sligo, North)

McLaren, Sir C. B. Bright (Leicester, Bosworth)

Majendie, James H. A. (Portsmouth)

Malcolm, Ian Z. (Suffolk, Stowmarket)

Manners, Lord Cecil R. J. (Leicestershire, Melton)

Mansfield, H. (Lincoln, Spalding)

Mappin, Sir Frederick T., Bt. (York, W.R., Hallamshire)

Markham, A. B. (Notts., Mansfield)

Martin, Richard Biddulph (Worcester, Droitwich)

Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F. B. (Finsbury, Central)

Mather, Sir William (Lancashire, Rossendale)

Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir Herbert E., Bt. (Wigton)

Maxwell, William Jardine (Dumfriesshire)

Mellor, Rt. Hon. John W. (York, W.R., Sowerby)

Melville, Beresford Valentine (Stockport)

Meysey-Thompson, Sir H., Bt. (Stafford, Handsworth)

Middlemore, John T. (Birmingham, North)

Mildmay, Francis B. (Devon, Totnes)

Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Fred. G., Bt. (Notts., Bassetlaw)

Milvain, Thomas (Hampstead)

Mitchell, William (Burnley)

Molesworth, Sir Lewis W., Bt. (Cornwall, Bodmin)

Montagu, George C. (Hunts., Huntingdon)

Montagu, Hon. John Scott- (Hants., New Forest)

Moon, Edward Robert P. (St. Pancras, North)

Mooney, John J. (Dublin Co., South)

Moore, William (Antrim, North)

Morgan, David John (Essex, Walthamstow)

Morgan, Col. Hon. Fred. C. (Monmouthshire, South)

Morgan, John Lloyd (Carmarthenshire, West)

Morley, Charles (Brecknock)

Morley, Rt. Hon John (Montrose, etc.)

Morrell, George Herbert (Oxon., Woodstock)

Morrison, Lieut. James A. (Wiltshire, Wilton)

Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)

Moss, Samuel (Denbighshire, East)

Moulton, John Fletcher (Cornwall, Launceston)

Mount, William A. (Berks., Newbury)

Mowbray, Sir Robert G. C., Bt. (Lambeth, Brixton)

Muntz, Sir Philip Albert (Warwickshire, Tamworth)

Murnaghan, George (Tyrone, Mid.)

Murphy, John (Kerry, East)

Murray, Rt. Hon. Andrew Graham (Buteshire)

Murray, Charles James (Coventry)

Murray, Colonel C. Wyndham (Bath)

Myers, William Henry (Winchester)

N

Nannetti, Joseph P. (Dublin, College Green)

Newdigate, Francis Alex. (Warwickshire, Nuneaton)

Newnes, Sir George, Bt. (Swansea Town)

Nicholson, William G. (Hants., Petersfield)

Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, North)

Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)

Norman, Henry (Wolverhampton, S.)

Norton, Captain Cecil W. (Newington, West)

Nussey, Thomas Willans (Pontefract)

O

O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)

O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid)

O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)

O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, North)

O'Connor, James (Wicklow, West)

O'Connor, Thomas P. (Liverpool, Scotland)

O'Doherty, William (Donegal, North)

O'Donnell, John (Mayo, South)

O'Donnell, Thomas (Kerry, West)

O'Dowd, John (Sligo, South)

O'Kelly, C. (Mayo, North)

O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, North)

O'Malley, William (Galway, Connemara)

O'Mara, James (Kilkenny, South)

O'Neill, Hon. R. Torrens (Antrim, Mid.)

O'Shaughnessy, P. J. (Limerick, West)

O'Shee, James John (Waterford, West)

P

Palmer, Sir Charles M., Bt. (Durham, Jarrow)

Palmer, George William (Reading)

Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)

Parker, H. Gilbert G. (Gravesend)

Parkes, Ebenezer (Birmingham, Central)

Partington, O. (Derbyshire, High Peak)

Paulton, James M. (Durham, Bishop Auckland)

Pearson, Sir Weetman D., Bt. (Colchester)

Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)

Pease, J. A. (Essex, Saffron Walden)

Peel, Hon. William R. W. (Manchester, South)

Pemberton, John S. G. (Sunderland)

Percy, Earl (Kensington, South)

Perks, Robert W. (Lincolnshire, South)

Philipps, John W. (Pembrokeshire)

Pickard, Benjamin (York, W.R., Normanton)

Pierpoint, Robert (Warrington)

Pilkington, Lieut.-Col. Richard (Lancashire, Newton)

Pirie, Duncan Vernon (Aberdeen, North)

Platt-Higgins, Frederick (Salford, North)

Plummer, Walter R. (Newcastle-on-Tyne)

Powell, Sir Francis Sharp, Bt. (Wigan)

Power, Patrick J. (Waterford, East)

Pretyman, Capt. Ernest George (Suffolk, Woodbridge)

Price, Robert John (Norfolk, East)

Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)

Pryce-Jones, Lieut.-Col. Edward (Montgomery Boroughs)

Purvis, Robert (Peterborough)

Pym, C. Guy (Bedford)

Q

Quilter, Sir W. Cuthbert, Bt. (Suffolk, Sudbury)

R

Randles, John S. (Cumberland, Cockermouth)

Rankin, Sir James, Bt. (Herefordshire, Leominster)

Rasch, Major Fred. C. (Essex, Chelmsford)

Ratcliff, R. F. (Staffordshire, Burton)

Rattigan, Sir William H. (Lanark, N.E.)

Rea, Russell (Gloucester)

Reckitt, Harold James (Lincolnshire, Brigg)

Reddy, M. (King's County, Birr)

Redmond, John E. (Waterford)

Redmond, William H. K. (Clare, East)

Reed, Sir Edward J. (Cardiff)

Reid, James (Greenock)

Reid, Sir Robert T. (Dumfries Burghs)

Remnant, James F. (Finsbury, Holborn)

Renshaw, Sir Charles B. (Renfrew, West)

Renwick, George (Newcastle-on-Tyne)

Richards, Henry Charles (Finsbury, East)

Rickett, J. Compton (Scarborough)

Ridley, Hon. M. White (Stalybridge)

Ridley, Samuel F. (Bethnal Green, South-West)

Rigg, Richard (Westmoreland, Appleby)

Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Charles T. (Croydon)

Roberts, John Bryn (Carnarvonshire, Eifion)

Roberts, John Herbert (Denbighshire, West)

Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield, Ecclesall)

Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)

Robertson, T. Herbert (Hackney, South)

Robinson, Brooke (Dudley)

Robson, William Snowdon (South Shields)

Roche, John (Galway, East)

Roe, Sir Thomas (Derby)

Rolleston, Sir John F. L. (Leicester)

Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye (Islington, South)

Ropner, Colonel Sir E. H. O. Robert (Stockton)

Rose, Charles Day (Cambridge, Newmarket)

Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W. (Bucks, Aylesbury)

Round, Rt. Hon. James (Essex, Harwich)

Royds, Col. Clement M. (Rochdale)

Runciman, Walter (Dewsbury)

Russell, Thomas W. (Tyrone, South)

Rutherford, John (Lancashire, Darwen)

Rutherford, William W. (Liverpool, West Derby)

S

Sackville, Colonel S. G. Stopford (Northants, North)

Sadler, Colonel Samuel A. (Middlesbrough)

Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse)

Samuel, Herbert Louis (Yorkshire, Cleveland)

Samuel, Stuart M. (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel)

Sandys, Col. Thomas M. (Lancashire, Bootle)

Sassoon, Sir Edward A., Bt. (Hythe)

Saunderson, Colonel Rt. Hon. E. J. (Armagh, North)

Schwann, Charles E. (Manchester, North)

Scott, Charles Prestwich (Lancashire, Leigh)

Scott, Sir Samuel E., Bt. (Marylebone, West)

Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)

Seely, Major John E. B. (Isle of Wight)

Seton-Karr, Sir Henry (St. Helens)

Shackleton, David James (Lancashire, Clitheroe)

Sharpe, W. E. Thompson (Kensington, North)

Shaw, T. F. Charles Edward (Stafford)

Shaw, Thomas (Hawick Burghs)

Shaw-Stewart, M. Hugh (Renfrew, East)

Sheehan, Daniel D. (Cork Co., Mid.)

Sheehy, David (Meath, S.)

Shipman, Dr. John G. (Northampton)

Simeon, Sir J. S. Barrington, Bt. (Southampton)

Sinclair, Captain John (Forfar)

Sinclair, Louis (Essex, Romford)

Skewes-Cox, Thomas (Surrey, Kingston)

Sloan, Thomas Henry (Belfast, South)

Smith, Abel Henry (Herts, Hertford)

Smith, Hugh C. (Northumberland, Tyneside)

Smith, James Parker (Lanark, Partick)

Smith, Samuel (Flintshire)

Smith, Hon. W. Fred. D. (Strand, Westminster)

Soames, Arthur W. (Norfolk, South)

Soares, Ernest J. (Devon, Barnstaple)

Spear, John W. (Devon, Tavistock)

Spencer, Rt. Hon. Charles R. (Northants, Mid)

Spencer, Sir Ernest (West Bromwich)

Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Lancashire, Ormskirk)

Stanley, Edward (Somerset, Bridgwater)

Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancashire, Westhoughton)

Stevenson, Francis S. (Suffolk, E.)

Stewart, Sir Mark J. McTaggart, Bt. (Kirkcudbright)

Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M., Bt. (Glasgow, College)

Stock, James Henry (Liverpool, Walton)

Stone, Sir John Benjamin (Birmingham, East)

Strachey, Sir Edward (Somerset, South)

Stroyan, John (Perthshire, West)

Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley (Essex, Maldon)

Sturt, Hon. Humphrey N. (Dorset, East)

Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath, South)

T

Talbot, Lord Edmund (Sussex, Chichester)

Talbot, Rt. Hon. John G. (Oxford University)

Taylor, Austin (Liverpool, East Toxteth)

Taylor, Theodore C. (Lancashire, Radcliffe)

Tennant, Harold John (Berwickshire)

Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)

Thomas, Sir Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)

Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr Tydvil)

Thomas, J. A. (Glamorgan, Gower)

Thompson, Dr. E. C. (Monaghan, N.)

Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R., Skipton)

Thorburn, Sir Walter (Peebles and Selkirk)

Thornton, Percy M. (Clapham)

Tillett, Louis J. (Norwich)

Tollemache, Henry J. (Cheshire, Eddisbury)

Tomkinson, James (Cheshire, Crewe)

Tomlinson, Sir William E. M. (Preston)

Toulmin, George (Bury, Lancashire)

Trevelyan, Charles P. (York, W.R., Elland

Tritton, Charles E. (Lambeth, Norwood)

Tuff, Charles (Rochester)

Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward (Essex, South-East)

Tuke, Sir John Batty (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities)

Tully, Jasper (Leitrim, South)

U

Ure, Alexander (Linlithgowshire)

V

Valentia, Viscount (Oxford)

Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard (Sheffield, Central)

Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)

W

Walker, Col. William H. (Widnes)

Wallace, Robert (Perth)

Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H., Bt. (Devon, Tiverton)

Walton, John Lawson (Leeds, South)

Walton, Joseph (York, W.R. Barnsley)

Wanklyn, J. Leslie (Bradford, Central)

Warde, Colonel Charles E. (Kent, Medway)

Warner, T. Courtenay T. (Stafford, Lichfield)

Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan and Kinross)

Wason, John C. (Orkney and Shetland)

Webb, Colonel William G. (Staffordshire, Kingswinford)

Weir, James Galloway (Ross and Cromarty)

Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. Earle (Taunton)

Welby, Sir Charles G. E., Bt. (Notts, Newark)

Wentworth, Capt. B. C. Vernon- (Brighton)

Wharton, Rt. Hon. J. Lloyd (York, W.R , Ripon)

White, George (Norfolk, North-West)

White, L. (York, E.R., Buckrose)

White, Patrick (Meath, North)

Whiteley, George (York, W.R., Pudsey)

Whiteley, Herbert (Ashton-under-Lyne)

Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)

Whitmore, Charles A. (Chelsea)

Whittaker, Thomas P. (York, W.R., Spen Valley)

Williams, Rt. Hon. Joseph Powell- (Birmingham, South)

Williams, Arthur O. (Merionethshire)

Williams, Colonel Robert (Dorset, West)

Willoughby de Eresby, Lord (Lincolnshire, Horncastle)

Willox, Sir John Archibald (Liverpool, Everton)

Wills, Sir Frederick (Bristol, North)

Wilson, Arthur S. (York, E.R., Holderness)

Wilson, Charles H. (Hull, West)

Wilson, Frederick W. (Norfolk, Mid)

Wilson, Henry Joseph (York, W.R., Holmfirth)

Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)

Wilson, John (Falkirk Burghs)

Wilson, J. (Glasgow, St. Rollox)

Wilson, John William (Worcestershire, North)

Wilson-Todd, Sir William H., Bt. (York, E.R., Howdenshire)

Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. Edmond R. (Bath)

Wolff, Gustavus Wilhelm (Belfast, East)

Wood, James (Down, East)

Woodhouse, Sir James T. (Huddersfield)

Worsley-Taylor, H. W. (Lancashire, Blackpool)

Wortley, Rt. Hon. Charles B. Stuart- (Sheffield, Hallam)

Wrightson, Sir Thomas, Bt. (St. Pancras, East)

Wylie, Alexander (Dumbartonshire)

Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George (Dover)

Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H. (Glamorgan, South)

Y

Yerburgh, Robert A. (Chester)

Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)

Younger, William (Lincolnshire, Stamford)

Yoxall, James Henry (Nottingham, West)

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF CONSTITUENCIES,

WITH

NAMES OF MEMBERS.

(*Compiled at the opening of the Session.*)

ENGLAND—COUNTIES (234 Members).

BEDFORDSHIRE (2)	
North, or Biggleswade	Compton, Lord Alwyne F.
South, or Luton	Ashton, T. Gair.
BERKSHIRE (3)	
East, or Wokingham	Gardner, Ernest.
North, or Abingdon	Loyd, A. K.
South, or Newbury	Mount, W. A.
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE (3)	
Mid, or Aylesbury	Rothschild, Hon. L. W.
North, or Buckingham	Carlile, W. W.
South, or Wycombe	Grenfell, Major W. H.
CAMBRIDGESHIRE (3)	
East, or Newmarket	Rose, C. D.
North, or Wisbech	Brand, Hon. A. G.
West, or Chesterton	Greene, W. R.
CHESHIRE (8)	
Altrincham	Disraeli, Coningsby R.
Crewe	Tomkinson, J.
Eddisbury	Tollemache, H. J.
Hyde	Chapman, E.
Knutsford	Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton.
Macclesfield	Davenport, W. Bromley.
Northwich	Brunner, Sir J. T.
Wirral	Hoult, J.
CORNWALL (6)	
Mid, or St. Austell	M'Arthur, W. A.
North-East, or Launceston	Moulton, J. F.
North-West, or Camborne	Lawson, Sir Wilfred, Bt.
South-East, or Bodmin	Molesworth, Sir L., Bt.
Truro	Durning-Lawrence, Sir E., Bt.
West, or St. Ives	Hain, E.

Cumberland (4)	
Cockermouth	Randles, J. S.
Mid, or Penrith	Lowther, Rt. Hon. J. W.
North, or Eskdale	Lowther, C. W. H.
West, or Egremont	Bain, J. R.
Derbyshire (7)	
Chesterfield	Bayley, Thomas.
High Peak	Partington, O.
Ilkeston	Foster, Sir B. W.
Mid	Jacoby, J. A.
North-East	Bolton, T. D.
South	Gretton, J.
West	Cavendish, Victor C. W.
Devonshire (8)	
East, or Honiton	Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H., Bt.
Mid, or Ashburton	Eve, Harry T.
North-East, or Tiverton	Walrond, Col. Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
North, or South Molton	Lambert, G.
North-West, or Barnstaple	Soares, E. J.
South, or Totnes	Mildmay, F. Bingham.
Torquay	Barratt, F. L.
West, or Tavistock	Spear, J. W.
Dorsetshire (4)	
East	Sturt, Hon. H. N.
North	Digby, J. K. W.
South	Brymer, W. E.
West	Williams, Col. R.
Durham (8)	
Barnard Castle	Henderson, Arthur.
Bishop Auckland	Paulton, J. M.
Chester-le-Street	Joicey, Sir James, Bt.
Houghton-le-Spring	Cameron, Robert.
Jarrow	Palmer, Sir C. Mark, Bt.
Mid	Wilson, John.
North-West	Atherley-Jones, L.
South-East	Lambton, Hon. F. W.
Essex (8)	
East, or Maldon	Strutt, Hon. C. H.
Mid, or Chelmsford	Rasch, Major F. C.
North-East, or Harwich	Round, J.
North, or Saffron Walden	Pease, J. A.
South-East	Tufnell, Col. E.
South, or Romford	Sinclair, Louis.
South-West, or Walthamstow	Morgan, D. J.
West, or Epping	Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R. M.
Gloucestershire (5)	
East, or Cirencester	Bathurst, Hon. A. B.
Forest of Dean	Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir C. W., Bt.
Mid, or Stroud	Allen, C. P.
North, or Tewkesbury	Dorington, Sir J. E., Bt.
South, or Thornbury	Colston, C. E. H. A.
Hampshire (5)	
East, or Petersfield	Nicholson, W. G.
New Forest	Montagu, Hon. J. W. E. D. Scott-

Hampshire (5)—*cont.*	
North, or Basingstoke	Jeffreys, A. F.
South, or Fareham	Lee, Lt.-Col. A. H.
West, or Andover	Faber, E. B.
Herefordshire (2)	
North, or Leominster	Rankin, Sir Jas., Bart.
South, or Ross	Clive, Capt. P. A.
Hertfordshire (4)	
East, or Hertford	Smith, A. H.
Mid, or St. Albans	Gibbs, Hon. Vicary.
North, or Hitchin	Hudson, G. B.
West, or Watford	Halsey, Rt. Hon. T. F.
Huntingdonshire (2)	
North, or Ramsey	Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn E.
South, or Huntingdon	Montagu, G. C.
Isle of Wight (1)	Seely, Capt. J. E. B.
Kent (8)	
East, or St. Augustine's	Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Isle of Thanet	Lowther, Rt. Hon. James.
Mid, or Medway	Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E.
North-East, or Faversham	Howard, Capt. J.
North-West, or Dartford	Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Hart Bt.
South, or Ashford	Hardy, Laurence.
South-West, or Tunbridge	Boscawen, A. Griffith.
West, or Sevenoaks	Forster, H. W.
Lancashire, North (4)	
Blackpool	Worsley-Taylor, H. W.
Chorley	Balcarres, Lord.
Lancaster	Helme, N. W.
North Lonsdale	Cavendish, Richd. F.
Lancashire, North-East (4)	
Accrington	Leese, Sir J. F.
Clitheroe	Shackleton, D. J.
Darwen	Rutherford, John.
Rossendale	Mather, Sir W.
Lancashire, South-East (8)	
Eccles	Clare, O. L.
Gorton	Hatch, E. F. G.
Heywood	Kemp, G.
Middleton	Fielden, E. B.
Prestwich	Cawley, F.
Radcliffe-cum-Farnworth	Taylor, T. C.
Stretford	Cripps, C. A.
Westhoughton	Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord.
Lancashire, South-West (7)	
Bootle	Sandys, Col. T. M.
Ince	Blundell, Col. H. B. Hollinshed
Leigh	Scott, C. P.
Newton	Pilkington, Lt.-Col. R.
Ormskirk	Stanley, Hon. Arthur.
Southport	Hall, E. Marshall.
Widnes	Walker, Col. W. H.

LEICESTERSHIRE (4)	
East, or Melton	Manners, Lord C. R. J.
Mid, or Loughborough	Levy, M.
South, or Harborough	Logan, J. W.
West, or Bosworth	M'Laren, Sir C. B. B., Bt.
LINCOLNSHIRE (7)	
East Lindsey, or Louth	Perks, R. W.
Holland, or Spalding	Mansfield, H. R.
North Kesteven, or Sleaford	Chaplin, Rt. Hon. H
North Lindsey, or Brigg	Reckitt, H. J.
South Kesteven, or Stamford	Younger, W.
South Lindsey, or Horncastle	Willoughby de Eresby, Lord.
West Lindsey, or Gainsborough	Ormsby-Gore, Hon. S. F.
MIDDLESEX (7)	
Brentford	Bigwood, J.
Ealing	Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George.
Enfield	Bowles, Lt. Col. H. F.
Harrow	Cox, J. E. Bainbridge.
Hornsey	Balfour, Capt. C. B.
Tottenham	Howard, J.
Uxbridge	Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. D., Bt.
MONMOUTHSHIRE (3)	
North	M'Kenna, R.
South	Morgan, Col. Hon. F. C.
West	Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Vernon.
NORFOLK (6)	
East	Price, R. J.
Mid	Wilson, F. W.
North	Gurdon, Sir W. B.
North-West	White, G.
South	Soames, A. W.
South-West	Hare, T. L.
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE (4)	
East	Channing, F. A.
Mid	Spencer, Hon. C. R.
North	Sackville, S. G. S.
South	Fitzroy, Hon. J. G.
NORTHUMBERLAND (4)	
Berwick-upon-Tweed	Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward, Bt.
Hexham	Beaumont, Wentworth C B.
Tyneside	Smith, H. C.
Wansbeck	Fenwick, C.
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE (4)	
Bassetlaw	Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir F. G., Bt.
Mansfield	Markham, A. B.
Newark	Welby, Sir C. G. E., Bt.
Rushcliffe	Ellis, J. E.
OXFORDSHIRE (3)	
Mid, or Woodstock	Morrell, G. H.
North, or Banbury	Brassey, Albert.
South, or Henley	Hermon-Hodge, Sir R. T., Bt.
RUTLAND (1)	Finch, Rt. Hon. G. H.

Shropshire (4)

Mid, or Wellington	Brown, Sir Alexander, Bt.
North, or Newport	Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
South, or Ludlow	Hunt, Rowland.
West, or Oswestry	Gore, Hon. G. R. C. Ormsby.

Somersetshire (7)

Bridgwater	Stanley, E. J.
East	Hobhouse, Henry.
Frome	Barlow, J. E.
North	Llewellyn, Evan H.
South	Strachey, Sir Edward.
Wells	Dickinson, R. E.
West, or Wellington	Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F., Bt.

Staffordshire (7)

Burton	Ratcliffe, R. F.
Handsworth	Meysey-Thompson, Sir H., Bt.
Kingswinford	Webb, Col. W. G.
Leek	Bill, Charles.
Lichfield	Warner, T. Courtenay T.
North-West	Heath, James.
West	Henderson, Sir Alexander, Bt.

Suffolk (5)

North-East, or Eye	Stevenson, F. S.
North, or Lowestoft	Lucas, Col. F. A.
North-West, or Stowmarket	Malcolm, Ian.
South-East, or Woodbridge	Pretyman, Capt. E. G.
South, or Sudbury	Quilter, Sir Cuthbert, Bt.

Surrey (6)

Kingston	Skewes-Cox, T.
Mid, or Epsom	Keswick, W.
North-East, or Wimbledon	Hambro, C. E.
North-West, or Chertsey	Fyler, John Arthur.
South-East, or Reigate	Cubitt, Hon. Henry.
South-West, or Guildford	Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John.

Sussex (6)

East, or Rye	Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Mid, or Lewes	Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir Hy., Bt.
North, or East Grinstead	Goschen, G. J., jun.
North-West, or Horsham	Johnstone, J. H.
South, or Eastbourne	Hogg, L.
South-West, or Chichester	Talbot, Lord Edmund.

Warwickshire (4)

North-East, or Nuneaton	Newdigate, F. A.
North, or Tamworth	Muntz, Sir Philip, Bt.
South-East, or Rugby	Grant, Corrie.
South-West, or Stratford-on-Avon	Foster, P. S.

Westmoreland (2)

North, or Appleby	Rigg, R.
South, or Kendal	Bagot, Capt. J. F.

Wiltshire (5)

East, or Devizes	Goulding, E. A.
North, or Cricklade	Fitzmaurice, Lord E. G. Petty.
North-West, or Chippenham	Dickson-Poynder, Sir J. P., Bt.
South, or Wilton	Morrison, Lt. J. A.
West or Westbury	Fuller, J. M. F.

WORCESTERSHIRE (5)	
East	Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. Austen.
Mid, or Droitwich	Martin, R. Biddulph.
North	Wilson, J. W.
South, or Evesham	Long, Col. C. Wigram.
West, or Bewdley	Baldwin, Alfred.
YORKSHIRE, EAST RIDING (3)	
Buckrose	White, L.
Holderness	Wilson, A. S.
Howdenshire	Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H., Bt.
YORKSHIRE, NORTH RIDING (4)	
Cleveland	Samuel, H. L.
Richmond	Hutton, John.
Thirsk and Malton	Lawson, J. Grant.
Whitby	Beckett, E. W.
YORKSHIRE, WEST RIDING (N.) (5)	
Elland	Trevelyan, C. P.
Keighley	Brigg, John.
Shipley	Flannery, Sir J. Fortescue.
Skipton	Thomson, F. W.
Sowerby	Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W.
YORKSHIRE, WEST RIDING (S.) (8)	
Barnsley	Walton, Joseph.
Colne Valley	Kitson, Sir J. B., Bt.
Doncaster	Fison, F. W.
Hallamshire	Mappin, Sir F. T., Bt.
Holmfirth	Wilson, H. J.
Morley	Hutton, A. E.
Normanton	Pickard, B.
Rotherham	Holland, Sir H. W.
YORKSHIRE, WEST RIDING (E.) (6)	
Barkston Ash	Gunter, Col. Sir Robert, Bt.
Osgoldcross	Austin, Sir John, Bt.
Otley	Duncan, J. H.
Pudsey	Whiteley, G.
Ripon	Wharton, Rt. Hon. J. Lloyd.
Spen Valley	Whittaker, T. P.

ENGLAND--METROPOLITAN BOROUGHS (62 Members).

BATTERSEA AND CLAPHAM (2)	
Battersea	Burns, John.
Clapham	Thornton, Percy M.
BETHNAL GREEN (2)	
North-East	Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
South-West	Ridley, S. F.
CAMBERWELL (3)	
Dulwich	Harris, Dr. F. Rutherfoord.
North	Macnamara, T. J.
Peckham	Banbury, Sir Frederick, Bt.
CHELSEA (1)	Whitmore, C. A.

Croydon (1)	Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. T.
Deptford (1)	Morton, A. H. A.
Finsbury (3)	
Central	Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F. B.
East	Richards, H. C.
Holborn	Remnant, J. R.
Fulham (1)	Fisher, W. Hayes.
Greenwich (1)	Cecil, Lord Hugh R. H.
Hackney (3)	
Central	Allhusen, A. H. E.
North	Bousfield, W. R.
South	Robertson, T. H.
Hammersmith (1)	Bull, W. J.
Hampstead (1)	Milvain, Thomas.
Islington (4)	
East	Cohen, B. L.
North	Bartley, Sir George.
South	Rollit, Sir A. K.
West	Lough, Thomas.
Kensington (2)	
North	Sharpe, W. E. T.
South	Percy, Earl.
Lambeth (4)	
Brixton	Mowbray, Sir R. G., Bt.
Kennington	Cook, F. L.
North	Horner, F. W.
Norwood	Tritton, C. E.
Lewisham (1)	Coates, Major Ed. F.
London, City (2)	Dimsdale, Sir J. C. Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Marylebone (2)	
East	Boulnois, Edmund.
West	Scott, Sir S. E., Bt.
Newington (2)	
Walworth	Bailey, Jas.
West	Norton, Capt. C. W.
Paddington (2)	
North	Aird, Sir John.
South	Fardell, Sir T. G.
St. George's, Hanover Square (1)	Legge, Col. Hon. H.
St. Pancras (4)	
East	Wrightson, Sir Thos., Bt.
North	Moon, E. R. P.
South	Jessel, Capt. H. M.
West	Graham, H. R.
Shoreditch (2)	
Haggerston	Cremer, W. R.
Hoxton	Hay, Hon. C. G. D.

Southwark (3)	
Bermondsey	Cust, H. J. C.
Rotherhithe	Macdona, J. Cumming.
West	Causton, R. K.
Strand (1)	Smith, Hon. W. F. D.
Tower Hamlets (7)	
Bow and Bromley	Guthrie, W. M.
Limehouse	Samuel, Harry S.
Mile End	Charrington, Spencer.
Poplar	Buxton, Sydney C.
St. George's	Dewar, Sir Thomas.
Stepney	Gordon, Major W. E. E.
Whitechapel	Samuel, S. M.
Wandsworth (1)	Kimber, Hy.
West Ham (2)	
North	Gray, Ernest.
South	Banes, Major G. E.
Westminster (1)	Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ashmead B.
Woolwich (1)	Crooks, Wm.

ENGLAND -PROVINCIAL CITIES AND BOROUGHS (164 Members).

Ashton-under-Lyne (1)	Whiteley, H. J.
Aston Manor (1)	Cecil, E.
Barrow-in-Furness (1)	Cayzer, Sir C. W.
Bath, City (2)	Murray, Col. C. Wyndham. Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R.
Bedford (1)	Pym, C. Guy.
Birkenhead (1)	Lees, Sir Elliott, Bt.
Birmingham, City (7)	
Bordesley	Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse.
Central	Parkes, Ebenezer.
East	Stone, Sir J. Benjamin.
Edgbaston	Lowe, F. W.
North	Middlemore, J. T.
South	Williams, J. Powell
West	Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. Joseph.
Blackburn (2)	Hornby, Sir W. H., Bt. Coddington, Sir W., Bt.
Bolton (2)	Cross, H. S. Harwood, G.
Boston (1)	Garfit, W.
Bradford, City (3)	
Central	Wanklyn, J. L.
East	Greville, Capt. Hon. R. H. Fulke.
West	Flower, Ernest S. F.
Brighton (2)	Loder, Gerald W. E. Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-

Bristol, City (4)	
East	Hobhouse, C. E. H.
North	Wills, Sir F.
South	Long, Rt. Hon. W. H.
West	Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H., Bt.
Burnley (1)	Mitchell, W.
Bury (1)	Toulmin, G.
Bury St. Edmunds (1)	Greene, Sir E. W., Bt.
Cambridge (1)	FitzGerald, Sir R. Penrose-, Bt.
Canterbury, City (1)	Heaton, J. Henniker.
Carlisle, City (1)	Gully, Rt. Hon. W. C. (Speaker).
Chatham (1)	Davies, Sir Horatio D.
Cheltenham (1)	Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Chester, City (1)	Yerburgh, R. A.
Christchurch (1)	Balfour, Major K. R.
Colchester (1)	Pearson, Sir Weetman D., Bt.
Coventry (1)	Murray, C. J.
Darlington (1)	Pease, Herbt. P.
Derby (2)	Roe, Sir T. Bell, R.
Devonport (2)	Kearley, H. E. Lockie, J.
Dewsbury (1)	Runciman, W.
Dover (1)	Wyndham, George.
Dudley (1)	Robinson, Brooke.
Durham, City (1)	Elliot, Hon. Arthur R. D.
Exeter, City (1)	Vincent, Sir E.
Gateshead (1)	Allan, Sir William.
Gloucester, City (1)	Rea, R.
Grantham (1)	Priestley, A.
Gravesend (1)	Parker, Sir Gilbert.
Grimsby, Great (1)	Doughty, G.
Halifax (2)	Crossley, Sir S. B. Whiteley, J. H.
Hanley (1)	Heath, A. H.
Hartlepool (1)	Furness, Sir C.
Hastings (1)	Thomas, Capt. F. F.
Hereford, City (1)	Arkwright, J. S.
Huddersfield (1)	Woodhouse, Sir J. T.

Hull, City (3)	
Central	King, Sir H. Seymour.
East	Firbank, Sir Joseph.
West	Wilson, C. H.
Hythe (1)	Sassoon, Sir Edward A., Bt.
Ipswich (2)	Goddard, D. F. Dalrymple, Sir Chas., Bt.
Kidderminster (1)	Godson, Sir Augustus F.
Leeds, City (5)	
Central	Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W.
East	Cautley, H. S.
North	Barran, R. H.
South	Walton, John Lawson
West	Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert J
Leicester (2)	Broadhurst, Henry. Rolleston, Sir J. F. L.
Lincoln, City (1)	Seely, C. H.
Liverpool, City (9)	
Abercromby	Lawrence, W. F.
East Toxteth	Taylor, Austin.
Everton	Willox, Sir J. A.
Exchange	M'Arthur, Charles.
Kirkdale	MacIver, David.
Scotland	O'Connor, T. P.
Walton	Stock, J. H.
West Derby	Rutherford, W. W.
West Toxteth	Houston, R. P.
Lynn Regis (1)	Bowles, T. Gibson.
Maidstone (1)	Evans, Sir F. H.
Manchester, City (6)	
East	Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J.
North	Schwann, C. E.
North-East	Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J., Bt.
North-West	Houldsworth, Sir W. H., Bt.
South	Peel, Hon. W. R. W.
South-West	Galloway, W. J.
Middlesbrough (1)	Sadler, Col. S. A.
Monmouth District (1)	Lawrence, Joseph.
Morpeth (1)	Burt, Thomas.
Newcastle-under-Lyme (1)	Haslam, Sir A. S.
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, City (2)	Plummer, W. R. Renwick, G.
Northampton (2)	Labouchere, Henry. Shipman, Dr. J. G.
Norwich, City (2)	Hoare, Sir Samuel, Bt. Tillett, Louis John.

NOTTINGHAM, CITY (3)	
East	Bond, Edward.
South	Bentinck, Lord H. C.
West	Yoxall, J. H.
OLDHAM (2)	Emmott, Alfred. Churchill, W. L. S.
OXFORD, CITY (1)	Valentia, Viscount.
PENRYN AND FALMOUTH (1)	Horniman, F. J.
PLYMOUTH (2)	Duke, H. E. Guest, Hon. I. C.
PONTEFRACT (1)	Nussey, T. Willans.
PORTSMOUTH (2)	Majendie, J. H. A. Lucas, R. J.
PRESTON (2)	Hanbury, Rt. Hon. R. W. Tomlinson, Sir William.
READING (1)	Palmer, G. W.
ROCHDALE (1)	Royds, Col. C. M.
ROCHESTER, CITY (1)	Tuff, Charles
ST. HELENS (1)	Seton-Karr, Sir Henry.
SALFORD (3)	
North	Platt-Higgins, F.
South	Groves, J. G.
West	Knowles, Lees.
SALISBURY, CITY (1)	Palmer, W.
SCARBOROUGH (1)	Rickett, J. Compton.
SHEFFIELD, CITY (5)	
Attercliffe	Langley, Batty.
Brightside	Hope, J. Fitzalan.
Central	Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard.
Ecclesall	Roberts, S.
Hallam	Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-.
SHREWSBURY (1)	Greene, H. D.
SOUTHAMPTON (2)	Simeon, Sir J. S. Barrington, Bt. Chamberlayne, T.
SOUTH SHIELDS (1)	Robson, W. S.
STAFFORD (1)	Shaw, T. F. C. E.
STALYBRIDGE (1)	Ridley, M. White.
STOCKPORT (2)	Leigh, Sir Joseph. Melville, B. V.
STOCKTON (1)	Ropner, Col. E. H. O. R.
STOKE-UPON-TRENT (1)	Coghill, D. H.
SUNDERLAND (2)	Doxford, Sir W. T. Pemberton, J. S. G.

Taunton (1)	Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E.
Tynemouth (1)	Harris, F. L.
Wakefield, City (1)	Brotherton, E. A.
Walsall (1)	Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir A. D., Bt.
Warrington (1)	Pierpoint, Robert.
Warwick and Leamington (1)	Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred.
Wednesbury (1)	Green, W. D.
West Bromwich (1)	Spencer, Sir Ernest.
Whitehaven (1)	Helder, Augustus.
Wigan (1)	Powell, Sir F. S., Bt.
Winchester, City (1)	Myers, W. H.
Windsor (1)	Barry, Sir F. T., Bt.
Wolverhampton (3)	
East	Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir H. H.
South	Norman, H.
West	Hickman, Sir Alfred
Worcester, City (1)	Allsopp, Hon. G. H.
Yarmouth, Great (1)	Colomb, Sir John C. R.
York, City (2)	Butcher, J. G. Faber, G. D.

WALES—COUNTIES (19 Members).

Anglesey (1)	Griffith, Ellis J.
Brecknockshire (1)	Morley, Charles.
Cardiganshire (1)	Davies, M. L. Vaughan.
Carmarthenshire (2)	
East	Thomas, Abel.
West	Morgan, J. Lloyd.
Carnarvonshire (2)	
North or Arfon	Jones, William.
South or Eifion	Roberts, J. Bryn.
Denbighshire (2)	
East	Moss, Samuel.
West	Roberts, J. H.
Flintshire (1)	Smith, Samuel.
Glamorganshire (5)	
East	Thomas, Sir Alfred.
Mid	Evans, S. T.
Rhondda	Abraham, William.
South	Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
West, or Gower	Thomas, J. A.
Merionethshire (1)	Williams, A. O.

MONTGOMERYSHIRE (1)	Humphreys-Owen, A. C.
PEMBROKESHIRE (1)	Philipps, J. Wynford.
RADNORSHIRE (1)	Edwards, F.

WALES—BOROUGHS (11 Members).

CARDIFF DISTRICT (1)	Reed, Sir E. J.
CARMARTHEN DISTRICT (1)	Davies, Alfred.
CARNARVON DISTRICT (1)	Lloyd-George, David.
DENBIGH DISTRICT (1)	Kenyon, Hon. G. T.
FLINT DISTRICT (1)	Lewis, J. H.
MERTHYR TYDVIL (2)	Thomas, D. A. Hardie, J. Keir.
MONTGOMERY DISTRICT (1)	Pryce-Jones, Lieut.-Col. E.
PEMBROKE AND HAVERFORDWEST DISTRICT (1)	Laurie, Lieut.-Col. J. W.
SWANSEA (2)	
District	Jones, D. Brynmor.
Town	Newnes, Sir G.

SCOTLAND—COUNTIES (39 Members).

ABERDEENSHIRE (2)	
East	Maconachie, A. W.
West	Farquharson, Dr. R.
ARGYLLSHIRE (1)	Ainsworth, J. S.
AYRSHIRE (2)	
North	Cochrane, Hon. T. H.
South	Arrol, Sir William.
BANFFSHIRE (1)	Black, A. W.
BERWICKSHIRE (1)	Tennant, H. J.
BUTESHIRE (1)	Murray, Rt. Hon. A. Graham
CAITHNESS-SHIRE (1)	Harmsworth, R. L.
CLACKMANNAN AND KINROSS (1)	Wason, Eugene.
DUMBARTONSHIRE (1)	Wylie, Alexander.
DUMFRIESSHIRE (1)	Maxwell, W. J. H.
EDINBURGH (MIDLOTHIAN) (1)	Murray, Hon. A. W. C. O.
ELGIN AND NAIRN (1)	Gordon, Hon. J. E.
FIFESHIRE (2)	
East	Asquith, Rt. Hon. H. H.
West	Hope, J. D.
FORFARSHIRE (1)	Sinclair, Capt. J

Haddingtonshire (1)	Haldane, R. B.
Inverness-shire (1)	Dewar, J. A.
Kincardineshire (1)	Crombie, J. W.
Kirkcudbrightshire (1)	Stewart, Sir Mark J. McT., Bt.
Lanarkshire (6)	
Govan	Craig, R. H.
Mid	Caldwell, J.
North-East	Rattigan, Sir W. H.
North-West	Douglas, C. M.
Partick	Smith, J. Parker.
South	Hozier, Hon. J. H. C.
Linlithgowshire (1)	Ure, Alex.
Orkney and Shetland (1)	Wason, J. C.
Peebles and Selkirk (1)	Thorburn, Sir Walter.
Perthshire (2)	
East	Kinloch, Sir J. G. S., Bt.
West	Stroyan, J.
Renfrewshire (2)	
East	Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
West	Renshaw, Sir Charles.
Ross and Cromarty (1)	Weir, J. G.
Roxburghshire (1)	Dalkeith, Earl of.
Stirlingshire (1)	McKillop, J.
Sutherlandshire (1)	Leveson-Gower, F. S.
Wigtonshire (1)	Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir H. E., Bt.

SCOTLAND—CITIES AND BURGHS (31 Members).

Aberdeen, City (2)	
North	Pirie, D. V.
South	Bryce, Rt. Hon. James.
Ayr District (1)	Dobbie, Joseph.
Dumfries District (1)	Reid, Sir R. T.
Dundee (2)	Robertson, Edmund. Leng, Sir John
Edinburgh, City (4)	
Central	Brown, G. M.
East	McCrae, George.
South	Agnew, Sir A. N., Bt.
West	McIver, Sir Lewis, Bt.
Elgin District (1)	Asher, Alexander.
Falkirk District (1)	Wilson, John.

Glasgow, City (7)	
Blackfriars and Hutchesontown	Law, A. B.
Bridgeton	Dickson, C. Scott.
Camlachie	Cross, Alexander.
Central	Baird, J. G. A.
College	Stirling-Maxwell, Sir J. M., Bt.
St. Rollox	Wilson, John.
Tradeston	Corbett, A. Cameron.
Greenock (1)	Reid, James.
Hawick District (1)	Shaw, Thomas.
Inverness District (1)	Finlay, Sir R. B.
Kilmarnock District (1)	Denny, Col. J. McA.
Kirkcaldy District (1)	Dalziel, J. H.
Leith District (1)	Ferguson, R. C. Munro.
Montrose District (1)	Morley, Rt. Hon. J.
Paisley (1)	Dunn, Sir Wm., Bt.
Perth City (1)	Wallace, Robert.
St. Andrews District (1)	Ellice, Capt. Ed. Chas.
Stirling District (1)	Campbell-Bannerman, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Wick District (1)	Bignold, Arthur.

IRELAND—COUNTIES (85 Members).

Antrim (4)	
East	McCalmont, Col. J.
Mid	O'Neill, Hon. R. T.
North	Moore, William.
South	Craig, C. C.
Armagh County (3)	
Mid	Lonsdale, J. B.
North	Saunderson, Col. Rt. Hon. E. J.
South	Campbell, J.
Carlow County (1)	Hammond, John.
Cavan (2)	
East	Young, Samuel.
West	McGovern, Thos.
Clare (2)	
East	Redmond, W. H. K.
West	Jameson, Major J. E.
Cork, County (7)	
East	Donelan, Captain A. J. C
Mid	Sheehan, D. D.
North	Flynn, J. C.
North-East	Abraham, Wm.
South	Barry, Edward.
South-East	Crean, Eugene.
West	Gilhooly, J.

DONEGAL (4)	
East	McFadden, E.
North	O'Doherty, W.
South	MacNeill, J. G. Swift.
West	Law, Hugh A.
DOWN (4)	
East	Wood, James.
North	Corbett, T. L.
South	MacVeagh, J.
West	Hill, Captain Arthur.
DUBLIN, COUNTY (2)	
North	Clancy, J. J.
South	Mooney, J. J.
FERMANAGH (2)	
North	Mitchell, Ed.
South	Jordan, Jeremiah.
GALWAY, COUNTY (4)	
Connemara	O'Malley, William.
East	Roche, John.
North	Nolan, Col. J. P.
South	Duffy, W. J.
KERRY (4)	
East	Murphy, J.
North	Flavin, M. J.
South	Boland, J. P.
West	O'Donnell, Thos.
KILDARE (2)	
North	Leamy, Edmund.
South	Kilbride, Dennis.
KILKENNY COUNTY (2)	
North	Devlin, Joseph.
South	O'Mara, James.
KING'S COUNTY (2)	
Birr	Reddy, Michael.
Tullamore	Burke, E. H.
LEITRIM (2)	
North	McHugh, Patrick A.
South	Tully, Jasper.
LIMERICK, COUNTY (2)	
East	Lundon, Wm.
West	O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
LONDONDERRY, COUNTY (2)	
North	Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John.
South	Gordon, J.
LONGFORD, COUNTY (2)	
North	Farrell, J. P.
South	Blake, Edward.
LOUTH (2)	
North	Healy, T. M.
South	Nolan, Joseph.

MAYO (4)	
East	Dillon, John.
North	O'Kelly, Conor.
South	O'Donnell, John.
West	Ambrose, Robert.
MEATH (2)	
North	White, Patrick.
South	Sheehy, David.
MONAGHAN (2)	
North	Thompson, Dr. E. C.
South	McKean, J.
QUEEN'S COUNTY (2)	
Leix	MacDonnell, Dr. M. A.
Ossory	Delany, William.
ROSCOMMON (2)	
North	O'Kelly, Jas.
South	Hayden, J. P.
SLIGO, COUNTY (2)	
North	McKillop, W.
South	O'Dowd, John.
TIPPERARY (4)	
East	Condon, T. J.
Mid	O'Brien, K. E.
North	O'Brien, P. J.
South	Cullinan, John.
TYRONE (4)	
East	Doogan, P. C.
Mid	Murnaghan, George.
North	Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C. H
South	Russell, T. W.
WATERFORD, COUNTY (2)	
East	Power, P. J.
West	O'Shee, J. J.
WESTMEATH (2)	
North	Kennedy, P. J.
South	Sullivan, Donal.
WEXFORD (2)	
North	Esmonde, Sir T. H. G
South	Ffrench, Peter.
WICKLOW (2)	
East	Cogan, Denis J.
West	O'Connor, James.

IRELAND—CITIES AND BOROUGHS (16 Members).

BELFAST, CITY (4)	
East	Wolff, G. W.
North	Haslett, Sir Jas. H.
South	Sloan, T. H.
West	Arnold-Forster, H. O.
CORK, CITY (2)	O'Brien, J. F. X. ———

DUBLIN, CITY (4)	
College Green	Nannetti, J. P.
Dublin Harbour	Harrington, T.
St. Patrick's	Field, William.
St. Stephen's Green	McCann, James.
GALWAY, TOWN (1)	Devlin, Chas. R.
KILKENNY (1)	O'Brien, Patrick.
LIMERICK, CITY (1)	Joyce, Michael.
LONDONDERRY, CITY (1)	Hamilton, Capt. the Marquess of.
NEWRY (1)	Carvill, P. G. H.
WATERFORD (1)	Redmond, J. E.

UNIVERSITIES (9 Members).

ENGLAND :—	
Cambridge University (2)	Jebb, Sir R. C. Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
London University (1)	Foster, Sir Michael.
Oxford University (2)	Anson, Sir W. R., Bart. Talbot, Rt. Hon. J. G.
SCOTLAND :—	
Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities (1)	Tuke, Sir J. Batty.
Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities (1)	Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. A.
IRELAND :—	
Dublin University (2)	Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir E. H. Lecky, Rt. Hon. W. E. H.

SUMMARY.

	No. of Members	
ENGLAND		
Counties	234	
Metropolitan Boroughs	62	
Provincial Cities and Boroughs	164	
		460
WALES		
Counties	19	
Boroughs	11	
		30
SCOTLAND		
Counties	39	
Cities and Burghs	31	
		70
IRELAND		
Counties	85	
Cities and Boroughs	16	
		101
UNIVERSITIES		
England	5	
Scotland	2	
Ireland	2	
		9
Total number of Members		670

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On Question, agreed to *nemine dissentiente*, and ordered to be presented to His Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

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PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the following Papers having been commanded to be presented to this House by His Majesty had been so presented on the following dates by delivery to the Clerk of the Parliaments, pursuant to Standing Order No. CXI., viz.—

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (IRELAND).

I. Abstracts showing acreage under crops and the number of live stock in each county and province, 1902–1903. (August 15.)

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III. Table showing the extent in statute acres, and the produce of crops for the year 1903. (December 30.) 51

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No. 13. (1903). Report on the trade and general conditions of the British Central Africa Protectorate for the year 1902–1903, by Major F. B. Pearce, Acting Commissioner. (September 10.)

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No. 14. (1903). Despatch to certain of His Majesty's Representatives abroad in regard to alleged cases of ill-treatment of natives, and to the existence of trade monopolies in the Independent State of the Congo. (October 21.)

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MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR BOARD.—Accounts for year ended 1st July, 1903 ; delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 72

SUBSIDIES TO SHIPPING COMPANIES.—Return respecting ; laid before the House (pursuant to Order of the 13th of August last), and to be printed. No. 3.) — 72

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.—Return of the number of aliens that arrived from the Continent at ports in the United Kingdom, in each month of the year 1904 ; ordered to be laid before the House.—(*The Lord Wolverton.*) 73

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.—Return (in parts) respecting ; laid before the House (pursuant to Order of this day), and to be printed. (No. 6.) 73

NEW BILLS.

SEA FISHERIES BILL [H.L.].—A Bill to provide against the destruction of undersized flat fish, was presented by the Earl of Onslow ; read 1^a ; and to be printed. (No. 4.) 73

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (METRIC SYSTEM) BILL [H.L.].—A Bill to render compulsory the use of the system of weights and measures, commonly known as the metric system was presented by the Lord Kelvin read 1^a ; and to be printed. (No. 5.) 73

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Eight o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

Message to attend His Majesty.

The House went, and, being returned—

NEW WRITS.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House that he had issued Warrants for New Writs dur during the recess.

For St. Andrew's District Burghs, in the room of Henry Torrens Anstruther, esquire, who hath accepted the Office of a Representative in the Conseil d'Administration of the Suez Canal Company; City of Rochester, James Hubert Gascoyne Cecil, commonly called Viscount Cranborne, called to the House of Peers; County of Meath (South Division), James Laurence Carew, esquire, deceased, County of Leitrim (Northern Division), Patrick Aloysius McHugh, esquire, an adjudicated bankrupt; Borough of Belfast (West Division), Hugh Oakley Arnold-Forster, esquire, who hath accepted the Office of Secretary of State for War; Borough of Warwick and Leamington, the honourable Alfred Lyttelton, K.C., who hath accepted the Office of Secretary of State for the Colonies; South-East Lancashire (Westhoughton Division), George Villiers Stanley, C.B., commonly called Lord Stanley, who hath accepted the Office of Postmaster General; County of Southampton (Southern or Fareham Division), Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Hamilton Lee, who hath accepted the Office of Civil Lord of the Admiralty; City of Londonderry, James Albert Edward Hamilton, commonly called Marquess of Hamilton, who hath accepted the Office of Treasurer of His Majesty's Household; North Lancashire (Chorley Division), David Alexander Edward Lindsay, commonly called Lord Balcarres, who hath accepted the Office of Junior Lord of the Treasury; Borough of Camberwell (Dulwich Division), Sir John Blundell Maple, baronet, deceased; Borough of Lewisham, John Penn, esquire, deceased; County of Devon (Mid or Ashburton Division), the Right Honourable Charles Seale-Hayne, deceased; County of Salop (Ludlow Division), Robert Jasper More, esquire, deceased; City of Norwich, Sir Harry Bullard, knight, deceased; Borough of Gateshead, Sir William Allan, knight, deceased; Ayr Boroughs, Charles Lindsay Orr-Ewing, esquire, deceased.

Mr. SPEAKER also informed the House that he had received the following letters:—

"15, Bishopsgate Street, Within, E.C.,
"1st February, 1904.

"The Right Honourable
"The Speaker of the House of Commons.

"Sir,

"I have the honour to inform you that the firm of Antony Gibbs & Sons, of which I and my brother Vicary Gibbs are members, accepted a contract with the Admiralty on the 2nd December last.

"I am, Sir,
"Your obedient servant.
"ALBAN GIBBS."

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"1st February, 1904.
"St. Dunstan's,
"Regent's Park.

"Mr. Speaker,

"I have the honour to inform you that at the latter end of last year, I (as a partner in the firm of Antony Gibbs and Sons) entered into a contract with the Admiralty, and am advised that by so doing I have, under an Act of George III. vacated my seat in Parliament.

"I beg to remain, Mr. Speaker,
"Your obedient humble servant,
"VICARY GIBBS." 73

CITY OF LONDON (*WRIT*).

Mr. Swift MacNeill (*Donegal, S.*) 75

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—

(*Mr. Swift MacNeill,*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

COUNTY OF HERTFORD (MID OR ST. ALBANS DIVISION (WRIT).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament, for the County of Hertford (St. Albans Division) in the room of Vicary Gibbs, esquire, who has accepted a contract with the Admiralty."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*).

Debate adjourned till to-morrow 77

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Right hon. Alfred Lyttelton, for Borough of Warwick and Leamington.

Right hon. Hugh Oakley Arnold-Forster, City of Belfast (West Belfast Division).

Right hon. Edward George Villiers Stanley, C.B. (commonly called Lord Stanley), South-East Lancashire (Westhoughton Division).

David Alexander Edward Lindsay (commonly called Lord Balcarres), North Lancashire (Chorley Division).

Arthur Hamilton Lee, esquire, County of Hants (Southern or Fareham Division).

James Albert Edward Hamilton (commonly called Marquess of Hamilton), City of Londonderry.

Charles Tuff, esquire, City of Rochester.

Edward Feetham Coates, esquire, Borough of Lewisham.

Frederick Rutherfood Harris, esquire, Borough of Camberwell (Dulwich Division).

Rowland Hunt, esquire, County of Salop (Southern or Ludlow Division).

John Stirling Ainsworth, esquire, County of Argyll.

Captain Edward Charles Ellice, St. Andrews District of Burghs.

Harry Trelawney Eve, esquire, County of Devon (Mid or Ashburton Division).

Louis John Tillett, esquire, City of Norwich.

Patrick Aloysius McHugh, esquire, County of Leitrim (North Leitrim Division).

David Sheehy, esquire, County of Meath (South Meath Division). 77

Elections.—Ordered, That all Members who are returned for two or more places in any part of the United Kingdom do make their Election for which of the places they will serve, within one week after it shall appear that there is no question upon the Return for that place; and if anything shall come in question touching the Return or Election of any Member, he is to withdraw during the time the matter is in debate; and that all Members returned upon double Returns do withdraw till their Returns are determined.

Resolved, That no Peer of the Realm, except such Peers of Ireland as shall for the time being be actually elected, and shall not have declined to serve, for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, hath any right to give his vote in the Election of any Member to serve in Parliament.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament, or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, to concern himself in the election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such Elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a candidate' or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected; or for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission, to influence the Election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament" *(Sir A. Acland-Hood)* 78

Mr. James Lowther 79
Mr. Gibson Bowles 79

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'Kingdom' in line 2, to the word 'for' in line 8"—*(Mr. James Lowther.)*

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustines) 79

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament, or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city, or borough of Great

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Britain, to concern himself in the election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such Elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a candidate, or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected; or for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission, to influence the Election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been elected or returned a member of this House, or endeavoured so to be, by bribery, or any other corrupt practices, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against all such persons as shall have been wilfuly concerned in such bribery or other corrupt practices.

Witnesses.—Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been tampering with any witness, in respect of his evidence to be given to this House, or any Committee thereof, or directly or indirectly hath endeavoured to deter or hinder any person from appearing or giving evidence, the same is declared to be a high crime or misdemeanour; and this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath given false evidence in any case before this House, or any Committee thereof, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender. .. 80

Metropolitan Police.—Ordered, That the Commissioners of the Police of the Metropolis do take care that, during the session of Parliament, the passages through the streets leading to this House be kept free and open, and that no obstruction be permitted to hinder the passage of Members to and from this House, and that no disorder be allowed in Westminster Hall, or in the passages leading to this House, during the Sitting of Parliament, and that there be no annoyance therein or thereabouts; and that the Sergeant at Arms attending this House do communicate this Order to the Commissioners aforesaid 81

Votes and Proceedings.—Ordered, That the Votes and Proceedings of this House be printed, being first perused by Mr. Speaker; and that he do appoint the printing thereof; and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same 81

Privileges.—Ordered, That a Committee of Privileges be appointed 81

Outlawries Bill.—"For the more effectual preventing of Clandestine Outlawries," read the first time; to be read a second time 81

Journal.—Ordered, That the Journal of this House, from the end of the last session to the end of the present session, with an Index thereto, be printed.

Ordered, That 500 Copies of the said Journal and Index be printed by the appointment and under the direction of Sir Courtenay Peregrine Ilbert, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., the Clerk of this House.

Ordered, That the said Journal and Index be printed by such person as shall be licensed by Mr. Speaker, and that no other person do presume to print the same 81

Parliamentary Papers (Recess).—The following Papers, presented by His Majesty's Command during the Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896—

1. Explosions (Cotton Powder Company's Factory at Faversham).—Copy of Report by Major A. Cooper-Key, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an Explosion of nitro-glycerine which occurred in the Final Washing House of the Factory of the Cotton Powder Company, Limited, at Uplees Marshes, Faversham, Kent, on the 23rd August, 1903.

2. Explosions (Cotton Powder Company's Factory at Faversham.—Copy of Report by Captain J. H. Thomson, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Explosives, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an Explosion of nitro-glycerine which occurred in the Final Washing House of the Factory of the Cotton Powder Company, Limited, at Uplees Marshes, Faversham, Kent, on the 9th November, 1903.

3. Sewage Disposal (Royal Commission)—Copy of Fourth Report of the Commissioners appointed to enquire and report what methods of Treating and Disposing of Sewage may properly be adopted, together with Vol. II., Minutes of Evidence, Vol. III., Reports on Bacteriological Investigations, and Vol. IV., Reports on the Land Treatment of Sewage and Methods of Chemical Analysis of Sewage Effluents.

4. Historical Manuscripts (Royal Commission).—Copy of Report on the manuscripts of Mrs. Stopford-Sackville of Drayton House, Northamptonshire, Vol. I.

5. Historical Manuscripts (Royal Commission).—Copy of Report on the Manuscripts of the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, K.G., K.T., preserved at Drumlanrig Castle, Vol. II.

6. Arsenical Poisoning (Royal Commission).—Copy of Final Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of Arsenical Poisoning arising from the Consumption of Beer and other articles of Food or Drink. Part I. Report.

7. Arsenical Poisoning (Royal Commission).—Copy of Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of Arsenical Poisoning arising from the consumption of Beer and other articles of Food and Drink. Part II. Vol. I. of Minutes of Evidence and Appendices.

8. Arsenical Poisoning (Royal Commission).—Copy of Final Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of Arsenical Poisoning arising from the consumption of Beer and other articles of Food or Drink. Part II. Vol. II. of Minutes of Evidence and Appendices.

9. Electricity in Mines.—Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire into the use of Electricty in Mines, with Minutes of Evidence and Appendices.

10. War in South Africa (Royal Commission).—Copy of Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the military preparations and other matters connected with the War in South Africa, with Minutes of Evidence (Vols. I. and II.) and Appendices.

11. Ankylostomiasis.—Copy of Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by J. S. Haldane, esquire, M.D., F.R.S., on Ankylostomiasis in Westphalian Collieries.

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12. Mines and Quarries.—Copy of General Report and Statistics for the year 1902; Part II., Labour; General Report and Statistics relating to persons employed and Accidents at Mines and Quarries in the United Kingdom, and to the enforcement of the Mines and Quarries Acts.

13. Mines and Quarries.—Copy of General Report and Statistics for the year 1902, Part III., Output; General Report and Statistics relating to the Output and Value of the Minerals raised in the United Kingdom, the amount and value of the metals produced, and the exports and imports of Minerals.

14. Prisons (England and Wales).—Copy of Report of the Commissioners of Prisons, and the Directors of Convict Prisons with Appendices, for the year ended 31st March, 1903.

15. Factories and Workshops.—Copy of Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops for 1902. Part II. Tables.

16. Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Great Britain).—Copy of Forty-sixth Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools for 1902. Part II. General Report and Appendices III. to XI.

17. Police (Metropolis).—Copy of Report of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis for the year 1902.

18. Inebriates Acts (Inspector's Report).—Copy of Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1902.

19. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the City of Bath, in the county of Somerset (being extensions and deviations of the existing and authorised undertaking of Bath Electric Tramways, Limited), and the abandonment of the construction of certain other Light Railways already authorised in the same city (Bath Electric Tramways (Light Railways Extensions) Order, 1903).

20. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Llandudno and Colwyn Bay Light Railway Order, 1898 (Llandudno and Colwyn Bay Light Railway (Deviation and Amendment) Order, 1903).

21. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the County of Kent, from the River Thames near Greenhithe to Dartford and Eynsford, with Branches to Swanley Junction and to Stansted (Dartford District Light Railways Order, 1903).

22. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Lastingham and Rosedale Light Railway Order, 1900 (Lastingham and Rosedale Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1903).

23. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, reviving the powers granted and extending the period limited by The Bankfoot Light Railway Order, 1898, for the compulsory purchase

of lands, and extending the period limited by that Order for the completion of the Railway and works by that Order authorised (Bankfoot Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1903).

24. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the borough of Burton-upon-Trent, the urban districts of Swadlincote and of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and the rural districts of Repton and of Hartshorne and Seales and of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, in the counties of Stafford, Derby, and Leicester (Burton and Ashby Light Railway Order, 1903).

25. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the borough and rural district of Dover and parish of River, in the county of Kent (Dover and River Light Railway Order, 1903).

26. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Bere Alston and Calstock Light Railway Order, 1900 (Bere Alston and Calstock Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1903).

27. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Southampton, from Totton to Fawley (Totton, Hythe, and Fawley Light Railway Order, 1903).

28. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the rural district of Dartford, in the county of Kent (Dartford Light Railway (Extension) Order, 1903).

29. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, transferring to the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the borough of Nelson the powers conferred upon the Barrowford Urban District Council by the Barrowford Light Railway Order, 1901, and amending that order and the Nelson Light Railways Order, 1901 (Barrowford Light Railway Order, 1901 (Transfer, &c.) Order, 1903).

30. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a light Railway in the county of Gloucester, in the parishes of Henbury and Shirehampton (Avonmouth Light Railway Order, 1903).

31. Railways (Continuous Brakes).—Copy of Return by Railway Companies of the United Kingdom on the use of Continuous Brakes for the six months ending the 30th June, 1903.

32. Statistical Abstracts (Foreign Countries).—Copy of Statistical Abstract for the principal and other Foreign Countries in each year from 1891 to 1900–1901 (Twenty-ninth Number).

33. Commercial Mission to South Africa.—Copy of Report received from Mr. Henry Birchenough, the Special Commissioner appointed by the Board of Trade to inquire into and report upon the present position and future prospects of British Trade in South Africa.

34. Colonial Import Duties.—Copy of Return relating to the Rates of Import Duties levied upon the principal and other Articles Imported into the Colonial and other Possessions of the United Kingdom.

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35. Conciliation Act, 1896 (Trade Disputes).—Copy of Fourth Report by the Board of Trade of Proceedings under the Conciliation Act, 1896.

36. East India (Sanitary Measures).—Copy of Report on Sanitary Measures in India in 1901–2 (Vol. XXXV.).

37. East India (Irrigation).—Copy of Report of the Indian Irrigation Commission, 1901–3. Part I. General. Part II. Provincial. Part III. Maps. Part IV. Appendix.

38. East India (Railways).—Copy of Report on the administration and working of Indian Railways, by Thomas Robertson, C.V.O., Special Commissioner for Indian Railways.

39. East India (Statistical Abstract).—Copy of Statistical Abstract relating to British India from 1892–3 to 1901–2. (Thirty-seventh Number.)

40. East India (Trade).—Copy of Review of Trade of India for 1902–3.

41. East India (Trade).—Copy of Tables relating to the Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries for the five years 1898–9 to 1902–3.

42. Imperial Institute (Indian Section).—Copy of Annual Report of the Imperial Institute (Indian Section) for the year 1902–3.

43. Irish Land Commission (Proceedings).—Copy of Return of Proceedings during the months of May, June, July, August, September, and October, 1903.

44. National Education (Ireland).—Copy of Appendix to the Sixty-ninth Report of the Commissioners, being for the year 1902. Section I.

45. National Education (Ireland).—Copy of Appendix to the Sixty-ninth Report of the Commissioners, being for the year 1902. Section II.

46. National Education (Ireland).—Copy of Appendix to the Sixty-ninth Report of the Commissioners, being for the year 1902. Section III.

47. Queen's College (Galway).—Copy of Report of the President for the Session 1902–3.

48. Agricultural Statistics (Ireland).—Copy of Tables showing the extent in statute acres and the produce of the Crops for the year 1903.

49. Agricultural Statistics (Ireland) (Migratory Labourers).—Copy of Report and Tables relating to Irish Migratory Agricultural and other Labourers for the year 1903.

50. Agricultural Statistics (Ireland).—Copy of Abstracts showing the Acreage under Crops and the number of Live Stock in each county and province of Ireland for the year 1902–3.

51. Agrarian Outrages (Ireland).—Copy of Return for the quarter ended 30th September, 1903.

52. Agrarian Outrages (Ireland).—Copy of Return for the quarter ended 31st December, 1903.

53. Evictions (Ireland).—Copy of Return of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 30th September, 1903.

54. Evictions (Ireland).—Copy of Return of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st December, 1903.

55. Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Eviction Notices).—Copy of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 30th September, 1903.

56. Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Eviction Notices).—Copy of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 31st December, 1903.

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57. Banking, Railway, and Canal Statistics (Ireland).—Copy of Report on the Banking, Railway, and Canal Statistics of Ireland for the half-year ended 30th June, 1903.

58. Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Ireland).—Copy of Forty-first Report of the Inspector for the year 1902.

59. Shell-Fish (Ireland).—Copy of Report of the Local Government Board for Ireland on the Shell-Fish Layings on the Irish coast as respects their liability to sewage contamination.

60. Board of Education.—Copy of Reports from University Colleges, 1903.

61. Board of Education (Special Reports).—Copy of Special Reports on Educational Subjects. School Training and Early Employment of Lancashire Children.

62. Board of Education (Education Committees).—Copy of Statement of Schemes for the Formation of Education Committees approved during the period 1st August to 30th November, 1903, by the Board of Education, under Section 17 of the Education Act of 1902.

63. Board of Education.—Copy of Return showing the Number of Persons on the Teachers' Register under Regulation 5 (2) (a) of the Teachers' Registration Regulations.

64. Board of Education.—Copy of Regulations relating to the Royal College of Science, the Royal College of Art, and to Museums under the Board of Education from 1st August, 1903, to 31st July, 1904.

65. Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.—Copy of Report on the Results of Investigations into Cider Making carried out on behalf of the Bath and West and Southern Counties Society in the years 1893 to 1902, by F. J. Lloyd, F.C.S., F.I.C.

66. Postal Convention (Denmark).—Copy of Agreement between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Denmark. Dated 22nd August, 14th September, 1903.

67. Wireless Telegraphy.—Copy of Procés-Verbaux and Protocole Final of the Preliminary International Conference at Berlin on Wireless Telegraphy.

68. Meteorology.—Copy of Report of the Meteorological Council to the Royal Society for the year ending 31st March, 1903.

69. Preferential and Retaliatory Duties.—Copy of Return of Preferential and Retaliatory Duties imposed, raised, reduced, or repealed in the years 1823, 1824, 1825, 1826, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1853, and 1860, stating (1) the rate of duty levied, and (2) the revenue derived from, and the quantities imported, of the articles concerned, in the three years preceding and in the three years following such change.

70. Chapter House, Westminster.—Copy of Memoranda by Professor Church, F.R.S., furnished to the First Commissioner of His Majesty's Works, etc., concerning the treatment of Decayed Stone-Work in the Chapter House, Westminster Abbey.

71. Peterhead Harbour.—Copy of Reports respecting Peterhead Harbour Works.

72. Colonial Reports (Annual).—Copies of Reports Nos. 394 (Turks and Caicos Islands, Annual Report for 1902), 395 (Seychelles, Annual Report for 1902), 396 (Ceylon, Annual Report for 1902), 397 (Gold Coast, Annual Report for 1902), 398 (Barbados, Report for 1902–3), 399 (Fiji, Annual Report for 1902), 400 (Lagos, Annual Report for 1902), 401 (British Solomon

Islands, Report for 1902–3), 402 (Cocos-Keeling Islands, Annual Report for 1903), 403 (St. Vincent, Report for 1902–3), 404 (Grenada, Annual Report for 1902), 405 (Southern Nigeria, Annual Report for 1902), 406 (Straits Settlements, Annual Report for 1902), 407 (Trinidad and Tobago, Report for 1902–3), 408 (Basutoland, Report for 1902–3), 409 (Northern Nigeria, Annual Report for 1902), 410 (Malta, Report for 1902–3), 411 (St. Lucia, Annual Report for 1902), 412 (Mauritius, Annual Report for 1902), 413 (British Guiana, Report for 1902–3).

73. Colonial Reports (Miscellaneous).—Copies of Reports Nos. 22 (Seychelles, Report on Para Rubber), 23 (Dominica, Roads and Land Settlement. Report on the Expenditure of the Parliamentary Grant-in-Aid), 24 (Grenada, Report on Land Settlement in Carriacou), 25 (Hong-Kong, Bubonic Plague. Memorandum on the Treatment of Patients in their own Homes and in Local Hospitals).

74. Canada.—Copy of Canadian Sessional Paper containing Correspondence in connection with the German Tariff.

75. West Indies.—Copy of Further Correspondence relating to the Volcanic Eruptions in St. Vincent and Martinique in 1902 and 1903.

76. Straits Settlements.—Copy of Reports on the Federated Malay States for 1902.

77. Cyprus.—Copy of Despatch from the High Commissioner covering a Report on the Agricultural Fund for the year ended 31st March, 1903.

78. Marriage and Divorce Law (Colonies).—Copy of Papers relating to the Laws of Marriage and Divorce in self-governing British Colonies.

79. Transvaal. Reports of the Transvaal Labour Commission.

80. Army (Recruiting).—Copy of Annual Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting for the first nine months of the year 1903.

81. Army (Volunteer Corps).—Copy of Annual Return of the Volunteer Corps of Great Britain for the year 1902.

82. Military Prisons.—Copy of Report on the Discipline and Management of Military Prisons in 1902.

83. Patriotic Fund.—Copy of Forty-second Report of the Royal Commissioners of the Patriotic Fund.

84. Rifle Ranges.—Copy of Return of Rifle Ranges available for Regular Troops and Militia, and of Rifle and Carbine Ranges available for the Imperial Yeomanry and Volunteer Forces [Address 16th July, 1903; *Mr. Courtenay Warner*].

85. Judicial Statistics (Scotland).—Copy of Report on the Judicial Statistics of Scotland for the year 1902.

86. Census of Scotland, 1901.—Copy of Eleventh Decennial Census of the Population of Scotland, taken 31st March, 1901, with Report (Vol. III.).

87. Board of Manufacturers (Scotland).—Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the Administration of the Board of Manufacturers (Scotland).

88. Licensing (Scotland) Act, 1903.—Copy of Tables showing the Populations of Counties, Local Government Districts and Burghs in Scotland with reference to the Provisions of the Licensing (Scotland) Act.

89. Naval Manœuvres.—Copy of Report of the Naval Manœuvres of 1903.

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90. Census of England and Wales, 1901.—Copy of Index to the Population Tables for England and Wales in the county volumes of the Census Report 1901.

91. Highways.—Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the President of the Local Government Board to inquire into the subject of Highways Authorities and Administration in England and Wales, with Minutes of Evidence.

92. Treaty Series (No. 12, 1903).—Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting Commercial relations between France and Jamaica. Signed at London, 8th August, 1902. Ratifications exchanged at London, 12th August, 1903.

93. Treaty Series (No. 13, 1903).—Copy of Accession of Mexico to the Industrial Property Convention, 1883, and additional Act of 1900. 7th September, 1903.

94. Treaty Series (No. 14, 1903).—Copy of Accession of Germany to the Industrial Property Convention, 1883, etc. 1st May, 1903.

95. Treaty Series (No. 15, 1903).—Copy of Parcel Post Convention, with detailed regulations, between the United Kingdom and Chile. Signed at Santiago, 21st October, 1902.

96. Treaty Series (No. 16, 1903).—Copy of Protocol for submitting to Arbitration certain questions as to the interpretation of treaties with Japan with regard to leases held in perpetuity. Signed at Tokio, 28th August, 1902.

97. Treaty Series (No. 17, 1903).—Copy of Treaty between the United Kingdom and China respecting Commercial relations, etc. Signed at Shangai, 5th September, 1902. Ratifications exchanged at Peking, 28th July, 1903.

98. Treaty Series (No. 18, 1903).—Copy of Agreement between the United Kingdom and France providing for the settlement of Arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the two Governments Signed at London, 14th October, 1903.

99. Treaty Series (No. 1, 1904).–Copy of Convention for the establishment of a Parcel Post Service between the United States and Hong-Kong. Signed at Washington, 21st November, 1903.

100. Turkey (No. 4, 1903).—Copy of further correspondence respecting the affairs of South-Eastern Europe.

101. Turkey (No. 1, 1904).—Copy of further correspondence respecting the Affairs of South-Eastern Europe, March to September, 1903.

102. China (No. 3, 1903).—Copy of Report by Acting Consul Litton on a jounrey in North-West Yunnan.

103. China (No. 1, 1904).—Copy of Report by Mr. C. W. Campbell, His Majesty's Consul at Wuchow, on a jounrey in Mongolia (with a Map).

104. Africa (No. 11, 1903).—Copy of Reports on the Geology of the East Africa Protectorate, by the late E. E. Walker (Government Geologist).

105. Africa (No. 12, 1903).—Copy of Report by the Mombasa-Victoria (Uganda) Railway Committee on the Progress of the Works and Revenue Working, 1902–3 (with two Maps).

106. Africa (No. 13, 1903).—Copy of Report on the Trade and General Conditions of the British Central Africa Protectorate for the year 1902–3 by Major F. B. Pearce, Acting Commissioner.

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107. Africa (No. 14, 1903).—Copy of Despatch to certain of His Majesty's Representatives abroad in regard to alleged cases of ill-treatment of Natives, and to the existence of Trade Monopolies in the Independent State of the Congo.

108. Africa (No. 15, 1903).—Copy of General Report on the Uganda Protectorate for the year, ending 31st March, 1903.

109. Forestry Laws (Commercial No. 8, 1903).—Copy of Reports from certain of His Majesty's Representatives abroad respecting Forestry Laws.

110. Most-Favoured-Nation Clauses (Commercial No. 9, 1903).—Copy of Return of Most-Favoured Nation Clauses in existing Treaties of Commerce and Navigation between Great Britain and Foreign Powers, stating the period when terminable, and showing whether they apply to the British Colonies, in force on the 1st July, 1903.

111. Houses of Legislature (Official Reports of Proceedings) (Miscellaneous No. 5, 1903).—Copy of Correspondence showing the systems in force in certain foreign countries for publishing Official Reports of Proceedings in the Houses of Legislature.

112. Drama (State or Municipal Support) (Miscellaneous, No. 6, 1903). —Copy of Return as to Financial Support given from State or Municipal Funds to Dramatic, Operatic, or Musical Performances in Foreign Countries.

113. Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3066 to 3113.

114. Trade Reports (Miscellaneous Series).—Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, Nos. 596 to 601.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table 81

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Royal Irish Constabulary Pensions.—Copy presented, of Return showing the names of all Constabulary Officers now in receipt of Pensions, of all Head Constables, Sergeants, and Constables, and of all Widows and Children to whom Pensions have been granted since the Constabulary Estimate for 1903–4 was prepared, with the amount and date of Pension in each case [by Command]; to lie upon the Table. 94

Imperial Ottoman Guaranteed Loan of 1855.—Copy presented, of Account for the year 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 94

Treasury Bills.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 24th January, 1904, amending the Regulation laid down in the Treasury Minute of the 31st May, 1889, relating to Tenders for Treasury Bills [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 1.] 94

St. Louis Exhibition Commission, 1904.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 29th August, 1903, directing that the Accounts of the Royal Commission for the St. Louis Exhibition, 1904, shall be examined and audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 94

Superannuation Act, 1859.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 20th August, 1903, awarding a Special Pension to Sir Kenelm Edward Digby, K.C.B., late Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 95

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SUPERANNUATIONS.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 21st November, 1903, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Deputy-Governor of a Convict Prison in Ireland professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are required [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 95

SUPERANNUATIONS.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 10th November, 1903, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Secretary to the Civil Service Commissioners professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are required [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 95

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 30th September, 1903, declaring that Thomas Ashbrook Forster, Postmaster, Newtown Post Office, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 95

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 2nd October, 1903, declaring that Alfred Wellham, machine hand, Royal Small Arms Factory, Birmingham, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 95

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 2nd October, 1903, declaring that Charles Chamberlain, principal foreman, Royal Carriage Department, War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 95

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 23rd December, 1903, declaring that William Edward Bird, engine driver, Royal Gun Factory, War Department, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 96

BANK OF ENGLAND.—Copy presented, of Return of the amount of Notes issued more than forty years which have not been presented for payment, and which have been written off on the 28th October, 1903, from the total amount of Notes issued from the Issue Department of the Bank of England [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 96

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.—Account presented, showing the gross amount received and expended on account of the Telegraph Service during the year ended 31st March, 1903, &c., [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 2.] 96

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (PARTICULARS OF PIECE WORK WAGES) (WEARING APPAREL).—Copy presented, of Order, dated 17th December, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying with modifications the provisions of Section 116 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to the manufacture of Wearing Apparel, and revoking the Order dated 22nd April, 1897 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 96

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FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (SPECIAL EXCEPTION—CREAMERIES).—Copy presented, of Order, dated 23rd October, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 42 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, granting certain special exceptions to Creameries, and revoking the Order (Ireland) dated 9th June, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 96

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (SPECIAL EXCEPTION—OVERTIME).—Copy presented, of Order, dated 29th December, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 49 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, with regard to the overtime employment of women on not more than thirty days in the year; and revoking all existing Orders [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 97

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (MANUFACTURE OF EARTHENWARE AND CHINA).—Copy presented, of Amended Special Rules, dated 30th December, 1901, and 28th November, 1903, for the Manufacture of Earthenware and China, as established by the Awards of the Umpire, Lord James of Hereford [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 97

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACTS (DANGEROUS AND UNHEALTHY INDUSTRIES).—Copy presented, of Regulations, dated 21st November, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 79 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, for the Manufacture of Electric Accumulators [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 97

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (HEALTH—BAKEHOUSES).—Copy presented, of Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, dated 30th December, 1903, in pursuance of Section 3, Sub-section (2), of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, modifying the proportion of cubic feet of space to be provided in certain Bakehouses [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 97

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (SPECIAL EXCEPTION—LIMEWASHING).—Copy presented, of Order, dated 2nd November, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department in pursuance of Section 1 (4) of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, granting special exceptions from the provisions respecting limewashing, &c., to certain factories and parts of factories; and revoking the Orders dated 16th November, 1895, 8th February, 1896, and 26th March, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 97

EXPLOSIONS (BLENHEIM ENGINEERING COMPANY'S FACTORY AT TUNNEL LANE, GREENWICH MARSHES).—Copy presented, of Report by Major A. Cooper-Key, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the circumstances attending an explosion of fulminate composition at the factory of the Blenheim Engineering Company, Limited, at Tunnel Lane, Greenwich Marshes, on the 18th December, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 98

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS.—

INCORPORATION OF ASTON MANOR.—Copy presented, of Charter of Incorporation of the Borough of Aston Manor, dated 17th August, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 98

INCORPORATION OF BROMLEY.—Copy presented, of Charter of Incorporation of the Borough of Bromley, dated 17th August, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 98

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INCORPORATION OF GILLINGHAM.—Copy presented, of Charter of Incorporation of the Borough of Gillingham, dated 17th August, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 98

INCORPORATION OF HORNSEY.—Copy presented, of Charter of Incorporation of the Borough of Hornsey, dated 17th August, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 98

INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES (REGUATIONS).—Copy presented, of Regulations made with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Home Department for the management and discipline of the certified Inebriate Reformatory at Ackworth, Yorkshire [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 98

INEBRIATES ACTS, 1879 TO 1899 (REGULATIONS FOR STATE INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES).—Copy presented, of New Regulations made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department prescribing the diet of ill-conducted or idle inmates of State Inebriate Reformatories, and revoking Regulations 64 (b) and 66 (b), and so much of Appendix A as relates to the diet of ill-conducted or idle inmates, of the Regulation dated 21st June, 1901 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 99

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Copy presented, of Licence granted to Ellis Smith, under the Provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 99

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Copy presented, of a Licence granted to Patrick Hardigan under the Provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 99

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Copy presented, of a Licence granted to Mary Ann Phillips, a convict under detention in Aylesbury Prison, permitting her to be at large on condition that she enter the Home of the Holy Rood at Worthing [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 99

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Copy presented, of Licence granted to Timothy W. Nolan, a convict, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.. 99

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND).—Return presented, relative thereto [Ordered 13th August, 1903; *Mr. M'Govern*]; to lie upon the Table. 99

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) ACT, 1899.—Copy presented, of Thirty-three Minutes by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland sanctioning Forms of Instruction for certain County Boroughs, Counties, and Urban Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 100

PHARMACY ACTS (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Order in Council, dated 9th October, 1903, approving of a Regulation made by the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 100

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MILITIA ACT, 1882 (DEPUTY LIEUTENANTS, IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Return of descriptions of qualifications of Deputy Lieutenants lodged during 1903, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 100

WINTER ASSIZES (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of an Order in Council, dated 9th October, 1903, and three Orders, dated 4th November, 1903, for holding Winter Assizes in Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 100

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Time-Table of Examinations for 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 100

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Additional Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland as to Experimental Science and Drawing [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 100

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of amended Rules made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland for the Examination in Music [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 100

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATON (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Additional Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board or Ireland as to Experimental and Practical Science [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.. 100

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT (IRELAND), 1877.—Copy presented, of Order in Council dated 1st December, 1903, giving effect to a Rule of Court [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 101

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT (IRELAND), 1877.—Copies presented, of two Orders in Council, dated 21st January, 1904, giving effect to rules of Court under the Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 101

WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.—Account presented, of the Sums received and paid in respect of the Wages and Effects of Deceased Seamen in the year ended 31st March 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 101

GENERAL LIGHTHOUSE FUND.—Account presented, of the General Lighthouse Fund showing the Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 3.] 101

SEAMEN'S SAVINGS BANKS (MONEY ORDERS AND TRANSMISSION OF WAGES).—Accounts presented, of all Deposits received and repaid during the year ended 20th November, 1902, and Statement as to Money Orders issued and paid from 1855 to 31st March 1903, and of Receipts and Payments in connection with the Transmission of Seamen's Wages from 1878 to 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 4.] 101

RAMSGATE HARBOUR.—Copy presented, of Statement of the Recepts and Payments for the year ended 31st March, 1903, together with an Account of the Receipt and Issue of Stores [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 5] 101

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WEST HIGHLAND RAILWAY (EXTENSION FROM BANAVIE TO MALAIG).—Copy presented, of Second Annual Report by the Board of Trade as to the condition and working of the Banavie and Mallaig Railway, the rates and charges for traffic, and the receipts and expenditure of any Company in working the Railway, for the year ended 1902–3 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 6.] 101

ARMY (PAY, NON-EFFECTIVE PAY AND ALLOWANCES).—Copy presented, of List of Exceptions to the Army Regulations as to Pay and Allowances sanctioned during the year 1902–3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 102

SUGAR.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 30th July, 1903; *Colonel Denny*]; to lie upon the Table 102

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN INDIA).—Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in India chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 30th September, 1903, &c. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 7.] 102

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).—Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in England, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 30th September, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 8.] 102

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (CAMBRIDGE).—Copy presented, of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, on 16th March, 1903, in substitution for the existing Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 9.] 102

UNIVERSTIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (CAMBRIDGE)—Copy presented, of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Magdalene College, Cambridge, on 22nd June, 1903, in substitution for Statute XXV. of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 10.] 102

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).—Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of New College, Oxford, on the 17th June, 1903, amending certain clauses of Statute III. of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 11.] 103

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT. 1877 (OXFORD).—Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of St. John's College, Oxford, on 15th May, 1903, amending Statute XV., 1, of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 12.] .. 103

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).—Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of Oriel College, Oxford, on 24th April, 1903, amending Statute IV., 7, of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 13.] 103

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.—Copies presented, of Two Orders in Council of the 29th January, 1904, providing for the re-measurement for tonnage of French and Spanish vessels in British ports [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 103

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Merchant Shipping Act, 1894.—Copy of Order in Council of the 9th October, 1903, applying the provisions of Sections 2 and 3 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in the case of deserters from Japanese vessels [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 103

Merchant Shipping Act, 1894.—Copies presented, of Orders in Council of the 16th November, 1903, confirming by-laws made by the Pilotage Authority for the Ports of Gloucester and Burntisland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 103

International Copyright Acts, 1844 to 1886.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 9th October, 1903, giving effect to the accession of Denmark to the International Copyright Convention of 9th September, 1886, and Additional Act of Paris, 1897 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 104

Foreign Jurisdiction Act, 1890.—Order in Council under the Act (The Zanzibar Order in Council, 1903) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 104

Government of India Act, 1858.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 8th December, 1903, approving a statement of proposed new and revised appointments and alterations of salaries in the establishment of the Secretary of State for India in Council [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 104

Greenwich Hospital Acts.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 9th October, 1903, sanctioning certain pensions now granted from the Funds of Greenwich Hospital being supplemented from Naval funds [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 104

Weights and Measures Act, 1878.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of 19th October, 1903, approving a new denomination of Standard Weight of Fifty Pounds, or "Half-Cental" [by Act]; to lie upon the Table .. 104

Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889 (Ordinance).—Copy presented, of University Court Ordinance No. IX. (Edinburgh, No. 3) Regulations for the Degree of Bachelor of Law (B.L.) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 14.] 104

University of Edinburgh.—Copy presented, of Report on the state of the finances of University, made by the University Court, for the year 31st August, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 15.] 104

University of Edinburgh.—Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Edinburgh for the year 1902–3 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 16.] 104

University of Glasgow.—Copy presented of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Glasgow for 1902–3 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 17.] 105

Licensing (Scotland) Act, 1903.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Secretary for Scotland under Section 109 of the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 105

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PRISONS (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Rule made by the Secretary for Scotland appointing the Police Cells at Kirkcaldy to be a legal Prison for the detention of untried prisoners for a period not exceeding fourteen days before or during trial, and of convicted prisoners for a period not exceeding seven days from the date of conviction [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 18.] 105

TRADE REPORT (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3116 and 3117 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 105

UNITED STATES (No. 2, 1904).—Copy presented, of Map to accompany Correspondence respecting the Alaska Boundary (United States, No. 1, 1904) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 105

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Lunacy.—Copy of Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, the number of patients seen, and the number of miles travelled by the Visitors of Lunatics between 1st April, 1903, and 30th September, 1903 [by Act].
2. Lunacy.—Copy of Return of all sums received by the Visitors of Lunatics for travelling expenses, or upon any other account, from 1st January to 31st December, 1903 [by Act].
3. Supreme Court (Rules).—Copy of Rules of the Supreme Court, dated 15th January 1904 [by Act].
4. County Court (Rules).—Copy of County Court Rules, 1903 [by Act].
5. Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.—Copy of Accounts of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board for the year ending 1st July, 1903 [by Act].
6. Public Records (Disposal of Documents).—Copy of Additional Rule under the Public Record Office Acts, 1877 and 1898, for the disposal of certain Documents [by Act].
7. Public Records (Colonial Office).—Copy of the Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act]. .. 105

KING'S SPEECH.—Mr. SPEAKER reported His Majesty's Speech, and read it to the House.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Mr. Laurence Hardy (*Kent, Ashford*) 106
Mr Plummer (*Newcastle-on-Tyne*) 113

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,—*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament"—(*Mr. Hardy*).

Sir H Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 118
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire E.*) 138

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

King's Speech (Motion for an Address).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

> "*Most Gracious Sovereign,—*
>
> "We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) 149
Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) 155
Mr. Paulton (*Durham, Bishop Auckland*) 158
The Attorney General (*Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs*) 158
Mr. John Ellis (*Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe*) 168
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 173
Lord Hugh Cecil (*Greenwich*) 179

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. John Redmond*) —put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Private Bills.—The Chairman of Ways and Means reported, That, in accordance with Standing Order 79, he had conferred with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining in which House of Parliament the respective Private Bills should be first considered, and they had determined that the Bills contained in the following list should originate in the House of Lords, viz. :—

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway.
Appleby Corporation Gas.
Barnard Castle Gas.
Barrow-in-Furness Corporation.
Barry Railway (Extension of Time, &c.).
Barry Railway (Steam Vessels).
Belfast and North East Ireland Electricity and Power Gas.
Belfast Corporation (Tramways).
Bexhill Corporation.
Bournemouth Corporation (Tramways).
Bridlington Corporation.
Bristol Corporaion.

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Bristol Tramways (Extensions).
Buxton Urban District Council.
Cambrian Railways.
Cardiff Railway.
Chesterfield Corporation Tramways and Improvements.
Chesterfield Gas and Water Board.
Coulsdon Tramways.
Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power.
Derwent Valley Water Board.
Ebbw Vale Urban District Water.
Edwardes Square Protection.
Elysée Palace Hotel Company.
Filey Improvement.
Gosport Water.
Great Western Railway.
Great Yarmouth Corporation.
Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas.
Harrogate Waterworks Tramroad.
Holywood Tramways.
Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment).
Hutcheson's Hospital and Hutcheson's Educational Trust (Substituted Bill).
Ilford Urban District Council.
Ipswich Dock Commission.
Isle of Thanet Light Railways.
King's College Hospital.
Lancashire Electric Power.
Leeds Corporation (Waterworks) Railway.
Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power.
Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company.
Liverpool and Wigan Churches.
Llanelly Harbour.
London, Chatham, and Dover Railway.
Maidenhead Bridge.
Manchester Corporation (General Powers).
Manchester Corporation Tramways.
Manchester Ship Canal.
Manchester Ship Canal (Finance).
Matlock and District Gas.
Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.
Metropolitan District Railway.
Metropolitan Railway.
Mid Cheshire Railways.
Milwr and District Mines Drainage.
Minehead Urban District Council Water.
Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway.
Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation.
Newcastle and Gateshead Water.
New River Company.
New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company.
North Wales Electric Power.
Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council.
Oakengates, Dawley, and District Joint Water Board.
Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway.
Preston and Blackburn Tramways.
Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad.

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Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways.
Preston Corporation Water.
Saint Bartholomew's Hospital.
Saint Mary Woolnoth.
Shipley Urban District Council.
Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time).
South Staffordshire Mines Drainage.
Stretford Urban District Council.
Ticehurst and District Water and Gas.
Trafford Park Dock and Railway.
Tynemouth Corporation.
Tynemouth Gas.
Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads.
Ulster Electric Power.
Victoria University of Manchester.
Victoria University of Yorkshire.
Weaver Navigation (Additional Finance).
Weaver Navigation (Constitution and Finance).
West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment).
West Metropolitan Railway (Extension of Time).
Weston-Super-Mare Grand Pier.
West Riding Tramways.
Withnell Gas.
York Town and Blackwater Gas 182

Adjourned at a quarter after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].—Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following cases, viz. :—

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway.
Appleby Corporation Gas.
Barnard Castle Gas.
Barrow-in-Furness Corporation.
Barry Railway (Extension of Time, &c.).
Barry Railway (Steam Vessels).
Belfast and North East Ireland Electricity and Power Gas.
Belfast Corporation (Tramways).
Bexhill Corporation.
Bournemouth Corporation (Tramways).
Bridlington Corporation.
Bristol Corporation.
Buxton Urban District Council.
Cambrian Railways.
Cardiff Railway.
Chesterfield Corporation Tramways and Improvements.
Chesterfield Gas and Water Board.

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Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power.
Derwent Valley Water Board.
East Argentine Railway.
Ebbw Vale Urban District Water.
Edwardes Square Protection.
Elysée Palace Hotel Company.
Filey Improvement.
Gosport Water.
Great Western Railway.
Great Yarmouth Corporation.
Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas.
Harrogate Waterworks Tramroad
Holywood Tramways.
Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment)
Hutcheson's Hospital and Hutcheson's Educational Trust (Substituted Bill)
Ipswich Dock Commission.
Isle of Thanet Light Railways
King's College Hospital
Lancashire Electric Power.
Leeds Corporation (Waterworks) Railway.
Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power.
Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company.
Liverpool and Wigan Churches.
Llanelly Harbour.
London Chatham and Dover Railway.
Maidenhead Bridge.
Manchester Corporation (General Powers).
Manchester Corporation Tramways.
Manchester Ship Canal.
Manchester Ship Canal (Finance).
Matlock and District Gas.
Mersey Docks and Harbour Board
Metropolitan District Railway.
Metropolitan Railway.
Milwr and District Mines Drainage.
Minehead Urban District Council Water.
Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway.
Newcastle and Gateshead Water.
Newcastle upon-Tyne Corporation.
New River Company.
New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company.
Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council.
Oakengates, Dawley and District Joint Water Board.
Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway.
Preston and Blackburn Tramways.
Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways.
Preston Corporation Water.
Saint Bartholomew's Hospital.
Saint Mary Woolnoth.
Shipley Urban District Council.
Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time).
South Staffordshire Mines Drainage.
Stretford Urban District Council.
Ticehurst and District Water and Gas.
Tynemouth Corporation.

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Tynemouth Gas.
Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads.
Ulster Electric Power.
Victoria University of Manchester.
Victoria University of Yorkshire.
Weaver Navigation (Additional Finance).
Weaver Navigation (Constitution and Finance).
West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment).
West Metropolitan Railway (Extension of Time).
Weston super-Mare Grand Pier.
West Riding Tramways.
Withnell Gas.
York Town and Blackwater Gas.

And they have certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in the following cases, viz :—

Coulsdon Tramways.
North Wales Electric Power.
Trafford Park Dock and Railway 185

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not yet been complied with, viz. :—

Coulsdon Tramways [Lords].
North Wales Electric Power [Lords].
Trafford Park Dock and Railway [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 187

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—

Rotherham Corporation.
London County Council (Tramways and Improvements).

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 187

PETITIONS.

BEERHOUSES.—Petition from Newport, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 188

CHARYULU, BANDARU APPALA.—Petition of Bandaru Appala.—Petition of Bandaru Appala ,Charyulu, for redress of grievances ; to lie upon the Table 188

GOUNDEN, MUTHIA.—Petition of Muthia Gounden, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 188

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LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Cambuslang; Beith; Walbottle; Westerhope; Haltwistle; Liverpool; Rastrick; Highworth; Cheltenham; Manchester; Forest Hill; Greenhead; Greenock; Tideswell; Matlock; Goose Green; Horton; Port Glasgow; Samlet; Prudhoe; Allenheads; Boston; Dawley; Bedlington; Pemberton; Henshaw; Pelton Fell; Birtley; Strensall; Paisley (two); Dunston; Haxby; North Lonsdale; Swindon; Alston Cross; Nottingham; Kirkby; Alloa; Melton Mowbray; Chichester; Liverpool; Glasgow; Frosterley; Wolsingham; Garston; Northampton; West Auckland; Ouston; Chopwell; Clara Vale Tent; Washington; Parkstone; Verwood; High Bickington; West Woodburn; Heatherlands; Broomhill; Kennington; Alston; Beeston; South Lambeth; Oldham; Hoxton; Aston Park; Little Hulton; Seaton Burn; Dudley; Scotswood; Lower Broughton; Salford; Blyth (two); Collingbourne; Andrew Bryson and another; Northumberland; Barrington; Backworth; Fittleton; Southsea (two); Portsmouth (two); Buckland; Ammanford; Boston; Amble; Market Lavington; Wishaw; Hackworth; New Hirst; New Hartley; Altarnum; Davidstow; Trevadlock; Gunnislake; Egloskerry; Callington; Lezant; Leghill; Dennington; Gravesend; Scarborough (two); Luton; Apsley Guise; Warrington; Eston; Guisbro'; William Woolfries and another; Hawick; Shillingstone; Walford; Aston; Loughborough; Bristol; Portesham; Sunderland; Bridport; Brixham; Gloucester; Juniper Green; Penryn; Widdrington; Bolton (eight); Middlesbrough; Chelston; Mitchell; St. Stephens; Padstow; Withill; Grampound Road; St. Austell; St. Dennis; Pendleton; Kennington; Jordanhill; Alloa; Tillicoultry; Islington; South Molton; Greetland; Elland; Sandbach; Salford Dock; Salford (two); Exmouth; Axminster; Hove Edge; Stourbridge; Brighouse; Malvern; Whiteinch; Halifax; Marnhull; Alnwick; Warrington; Chardstock; Leominster; St. Blazey; Sauchie; Halton-le-Gate; Dublin; Llanidan; Partick; Dreghorn; Stevenston; Devonport; London Auxiliary of the United Kingdom Alliance (two); Newcastle (four); Coleorton; Wansbeck; West Hartlepool (two); Cwmbran; Bournemouth (two); Winton; Christchurch; Muirkirk; Troon (two); Dalmellington; Glenbuck; Ayr; Auchinleck; Lugar (two); Girvan; Edinburgh (three); Risca; H. W. Garbutt and another; Shiney Row; Birkenhead (three); Alva; Rishton; Kelty; Markinch; Buckhaven; South Wingfield; Peak Dale; Bugsworth; Haggs; Grangemouth; Larbert; Laurieston; Lennoxtown; Carron; Blackbraes; Bonnybridge; Kilsyth; Milngarvie; Ivybridge; Clapham Park; Putney; Bradford (three); Salford; Hetton-le-Hole; New Lambton; Midhurst; Dundee (two); Lochee; Stockport; Cockermouth; Dittisham; Barnard Castle; Stanhope; New Hatcham; Southgate; Leytonstone; Riddings; Jesmond; Widnes; Inverness; Bolton-on-Dearne; Otley; Dukinfield; Old Hetton; Lancaster; Whitley Bay; Hucknall Torkard; Penistone; Birdwell; Crane Moor; Maryport; Stalybridge; Trowbridge; Bradford-on-Avon; Westbury; Salford; Ryhope; Chard; Cambois; Townhill; Cardenden; Cefncanol; Meifod; Llanrhaiadr; Hernant; Llanfair Caereinion (two); Llandycwm; Carmel Siloh; Rehoboth; Maengwynedd; Llanfyllin; Bridlington; Paul; Charlesworth; Glossop; Fairfield; Leicester; Great Meols; West Kirby, Wallasey; Seacombe; Ellesmere Port; Middlewich (two); Northwich (three); Barnton; Whitegate; Frodsham; Cullompton; Christow; Bristol; Oldham; Salisbury; Crewe; Perranwell; Goonhavern; Truro; South Petherton; Bampton and Huntsham; Dumfries (two); Annan; Sanquhar; Topsham; Whalley Range; Fence Houses; Thornaby-on-Tees; Withington; Dearham; Gotham; Mid-Cheshire; Stirling; and Durham; to lie upon the Table .. 188

NADAN, SIVASULRAMANIA.—Petition of Sivasulramania Nadan, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 190

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RAMCHANDA, GANESH.—Petition from Ganesh Ramchanda, for inquiry into his case; to lie upon the Table 190

RATING OF GROUND RENTS AND VALUES.—Petition from St. Pancras, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 190

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.—Petitions for prohibition; from Bawtry, Taunton, Glastonbury, and Yeovil; to lie upon the Table 190

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SOUTH AFRICA.—Copy presented, of Further Correspondence relating to the Affairs of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 190

BARBADOS.—Copy presented, of Prison Rule relating to the Vaccination of Prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 190

COUNTY COURTS, ENGLAND (FEES).—Copy presented, of Treasury Order, dated 30th December, 1903, regulating Court Fees in County Courts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 190

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House :—

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY).—Further Return, relative thereto [ordered 14th February, 1900; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 19.] 190

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND).—Copy ordered, " of Account of the Receipts and Payments of the Accountant-General of the Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland, in respect of the Funds of Suitors in the said Court, including therein Funds to the credit of Lunacy Accounts, in the year to the 30th September, 1903; together with a Statement of Liabilities and Assets, and particulars of Securities in Court, on the 30th day of September, 1903." —(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) 191

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FUND, 1902–3.—Copy ordered, " of Accounts of the Civil Contingencies Fund, 1902–3, showing (1) the Receipts and Payments in connection with the Fund in the year ended the 31st day of March, 1903; (2) the distribution of the Capital of the Fund at the commencement and close of the year, together with Copy of Correspondence with the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) 191

NATIONAL GALLERY (REPORT).—Copy ordered, " of the Report of the Directors of the National Gallery for the year 1903, with Appendices."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) 191

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES (ELECTORS, &c.) (UNITED KINGDOM).—Address for " Return showing, with regard to each Parliamentary Constituency in the United Kingdom, the total number and, as far as possible, the number in each class of Electors on the register now in force; and also showing the Population and Inhabited Houses in each Constituency (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 34, of Session 1903)."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*) .. 191

TRADE AND NAVIGATION.—Copy ordered, "of Accounts relating to Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom for each month during the year 1904."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) 191

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.—Return ordered, "of the number of Aliens that arrived from the Continent at Ports in the United Kingdom in each month of the year 1904."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) 191

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

EXPENSES OF MILITARY OPERATIONS BEYOND THE THIBET FRONTIER.—Questions, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Brodrick .. 192

DISTRESS IN IRELAND—DISTRIBUTION OF SEED POTATOES.—Question, Mr. James O'Kelly (Roscommon, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 192

COMPULSORY PURCHASE IN WEST OF IRELAND.—Question, Mr. James O'Kelly; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 193

CHINESE LABOUR IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 193

LORD CURZON AND THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF SHIRAZ.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, Earl Percy 194

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—John Johnson, esquire, for the Borough of Gateshead .. 194

BALLOT FOR BILLS AND MOTIONS.—Ordered, That no Bills, other than Government Bills, be introduced in anticipation of the ballot, and that all Members who desire to ballot, whether for Bills, or Motions for Tuesday, 9th February, and Tuesday, 16th February, and Wednesday, 10th February, and Wednesday 17th February, do hand in their names at the Table during the sitting of the House on the first or second day of the session and that a copy of such Notices be handed in, at the latest, during the sitting of the House on the third day of the Session. That the ballot for the precedence of the said Bills and Motions be taken on the third day on which the House sits, at a convenient time and place, to be appointed by Mr. Speaker, and that the presentation of Bills on the fourth sitting day be taken as soon after Twelve o'clock as Mr. Speaker may deem convenient.—(*Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) .. .. : 194

CITY OF LONDON WRIT.—Order read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Question [2nd February], "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a New Writ for the electing of a member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of London, in the room of the hon. Alban George Henry Gibbs, who, since his election for the said city, has undertaken a contract, with the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, for the public service."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.). 195

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Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'a Select Committee of seven Members be appointed to consider whether Mr. Vicary Gibbs and Mr. Alban Gibbs are disqualified from sitting or voting as Members of this House under the Statute 22 Geo. 3, c. 45, and to report their opinion thereon.' "—(*Mr. Swift MacNeill.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's*).. 196

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the electing of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of London, in the room of the hon. Alban George Henry Gibbs, who, since his election for the said city, has undertaken a contract, with the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, for the public service.

COUNTY OF HERTFORD (MID OR ST. ALBANS DIVISION) (WRIT).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd February], "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the electing of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the County of Hertford (Mid or St, Albans Division) in the room of the hon. Vicary Gibbs, who, since his election for the said county, has undertaken a contract, with the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, for the public service."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Question again proposed.

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the electing of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the County of Hertford (Mid or St. Albans Division) in the room of the hon. Vicary Gibbs, who, since his election for the said county, has undertaken a contract, with the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, for the public service 198

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS). SECOND DAY'S DEBATE.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [2nd February].

"That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

Most Gracious Sovereign—

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*) Question again proposed.

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Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*). 199
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Wyndham, Dover*). 220
Mr. Haldane (*Haddingtonshire*). 238
Mr. Blake (*Longford, N.*) 243
Mr. *Austin Taylor* (*Liverpool, East Toxteth*). 252
Mr. T. W. Russell (*Tryone, S.*) 256
Mr. Power (*Waterford, E.*) 261
Sir Robert Reid (*Dumfries Burghs*) 265
Mr. Sloan (*Belfast, S.*) 266
Mr. Joseph Devlin (*Kilkenny, N.*) 268

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

King's Speech (Motion for an Address).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [3rd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

Most Gracious Sovereign,—

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Laurence Hardy.*).

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Mr. Joseph Devlin 270
Mr. Swift MacNeill (*Donegal, S.*) 273
Colonel Saunderson (*Armagh, N.*) 278
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 284
Mr. Moon (*St. Pancras, N.*) 296
Sir John Kennaway (*Devonshire, Honiton*) 298
Mr. Hugh Law (*Donegal, W.*) 299

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS, THURSDAY, 4th FEBRUARY, 1904.

Sat First.—The Viscount Colville of Culross sat first in Parliament after the death of his father 301

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—

Acton Improvement.
Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway
Amersham, Beaconsfield, and District Water.
Appleby Corporation Gas.

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Arlesey Gas.
Baker Street and Waterloo Railway.
Barnard Castle Gas.
Barnet District Gas and Water.
Barrow-in-Furness Corporation.
Barry Railway (Extension of Time, &c.).
Barry Railway (Steam Vessels).
Belfast and North-East Ireland Electricity and Power Gas.
Belfast Corporation (Tramways).
Bexhill Corporation .
Bexhill Water and Gas.
Birkdale Improvement.
Bishop's Stortford and District Gas.
Blyth and Cowpen Gas.
Bournemouth Corporation (Tramways).
Bridlington Corporation.
Bristol Corporation.
Brixham Gas.
Brymbo Water.
Buxton Urban District Council.
Cambrian Railways.
Cardiff Railway.
Carlisle Corporation.
Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway.
Cheshire Electricity and Power Gas.
Chesterfield Corporation (Tramways and Improvements).
Chesterfield Gas and Water Board.
Chippenham Gas.
Colney Hatch Gas.
Corbridge Gas.
Corporation of London (Southwark and other Bridges).
Croydon Gas.
Crystal Palace District Gas.
Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power.
Derwent Valley Water Board.
Doncaster Corporation.
Donegal Railway.
East Argentine Railway.
East London and Lower Thames Electric Power.
Ebbw Vale Urban District Water.
Edwardes Square Protection.
Elysée Palace Hotel Company.
Felixstowe Gas.
Filey Improvement.
Gas Light and Coke and other Gas Companies Acts Amendment.
Gomersal Gas.
Gosport Water.
Great Central and Midland Joint Railways.
Great Central Railway.
Great Eastern Railway.
Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats).
Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time).
Great Northern Railway.
Great Western Railway.
Great Yarmouth Corporation.
Hampton-in-Arden Gas.

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Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas.
Harrogate Waterworks Tramroad.
Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways.
Holywood Tramways.
Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment).
Humber Commercial Railway and Dock.
Hutcheson's Hospital and Hutcheson's Educational Trust (Substituted Bill).
Ipswich Dock Commission.
Isle of Thanet Light Railways.
Kettering Improvement.
King's College Hospital.
Kirby-in-Ashfield Urban District Gas.
Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Steam Vessels).
Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Various Powers).
Lancashire Electric Power.
Leeds Corporation (Consolidation).
Leeds Corporation (Waterworks) Railway.
Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power.
Leyton Urban District Council.
Lincolnshire and Yorkshire Electric Power.
Littlestone-on-Sea and District Water.
Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company.
Liverpool and Wigan Churches.
Llanelly Harbour.
London and India Docks Company.
London and North-Western Railway.
London, Camberwell, and Dulwich Tramways.
London, Chatham, and Dover Railway.
London County Council (General Powers).
London Port and Docks.
London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway.
Lytham Improvement.
Maidenhead Bridge.
Manchester Corporation (General Powers).
Manchester Corporation Tramways.
Manchester Ship Canal.
Manchester Ship Canal (Finance).
Matlock and District Gas.
Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.
Metropolitan District Railway.
Metropolitan Railway.
Midland Railway.
Milwr and District Mines Drainage.
Minehead Urban District Council Water.
Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway.
Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway.
Newcastle and Gateshead Water.
Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation.
New River Company.
New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company.
North and South Woolwich Electric Railway.
North Staffordshire Railway.
North-Western Electricity and Power Gas.
Norwich Water.
Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council.

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Oakengates, Dawley, and District Joint Water Board.
Plymouth and North Devon Direct Railway (Abandonment).
Plymouth Corporation.
Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway.
Preston and Blackburn Tramways.
Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways.
Preston Corporation Water.
Radcliffe Tramways and Improvement.
Reading Corporation.
Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water.
Romford and District Tramways (Extensions).
Ryde Gas.
Saddleworth and Springhead Tramways (Abandonment).
St. Bartholomew's Hospital.
St. Marylebone Electric Lighting.
St. Mary Woolnoth.
Selby Urban District Council.
Sheffield, Laughton, and Maltby Railway.
Sheppy Gas.
Shipley Urban District Council.
Skipton Water and Improvement.
Soothill Nether Urban District Tramways.
Southend-on-Sea Gas.
Southend Water.
Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time).
South Shields Gas.
South Staffordshire Mines Drainage.
South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time).
Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway.
Stretford Urban District Council.
Surrey Commercial Dock.
Sutton Gas.
Swindon Corporation.
Thames River Steamboat Service.
Thames Steamboat Trust.
Thurles Urban District Council Water.
Ticehurst and District Water and Gas.
Tottenham Improvement.
Tynemouth Corporation.
Tynemouth Gas.
Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads.
Ulster Electric Power.
Victoria University of Manchester.
Victoria University of Yorkshire.
Wallasey Tramways and Improvements.
Watford and District Tramways (Extension of Time).
Weaver Navigation (Additional Finance).
Weaver Navigation (Constitution and Finance).
Wellington (Somerset) Gas.
West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment).
West Metropolitan Railway (Extension of Time).
Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier.
West Riding Tramways.
Whitby Gas.
Withnell Gas.
Wolverhampton Corporation.
Yorktown and Blackwater Gas.

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And the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :—

Coulston Tramways.
London County Council (Tramways and Improvements).
North Wales Electric Power.
Rotherham Corporation.
Trafford Park Dock and Railway.. 301

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES (SCOTLAND).—Forty-seventh Annual Report of the Registrar-General (Abstracts of 1901).. 305

WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.—Account of the sums received and paid in respect of the wages and effects of deceased seamen in the year ended 31st March, 1903.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 305

GENERAL LIGHTHOUSE FUND.—Account of the General Lighthouse Fund, under the Acts 57 and 58 Vict. c. 60, s. 679, and 61 and 62 Vict. c. 44, showing the the income and expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1903 .. 305

SEAMEN'S SAVINGS BANKS (MONEY ORDERS, AND TRANSMISSION OF WAGES).— Account of all deposits received and repaid by the Board of Trade on account of Seamen's Savings Banks, under the authority of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, during the year ended 20th November, 1902, and of the interest thereon ; statement showing the number and amount of seamen's money orders issued and paid at ports in the United Kingdom and at ports abroad from 1855 to 31st March, 1903 ; also statement showing the receipts and payments in connection with the transmission of seamen's wages, home and foreign, from 1878 to 31st March, 1903 305

RAMSGATE HARBOUR.—Statement of the receipts and payments made by the Board of Trade for the year ended 31st March 1903 ; together with an account of the receipt and issue of stores 306

ROYAL PARKS AND GARDENS.—Rule for Holyrood Park ; Provisional Rule for Hyde Park, St. James' and the Green Parks, Regent's Park, Greenwich Park, Hampton Court Park, Hampton Court Gardens, Richmond Park and Green, and Bushy Park 306

COUNTY COURT ENGLAND (FEES).—Treasury Order, dated 30th December, 1903, regulating Court Fees in County Courts 306

POST OFFICE.

(Money Orders). Statutory Rules and Orders (1903). No. 806.
(Telegraphs). Account showing the gross amount received, and the gross amount expended, in respect of the Telegraph Service from the date of the transfer of the telegraphs to the State to the 31st day of March, 1902 (in continuation of No. 31, of Session 1903). 306

BUILDING SOCIETIES.—Ninth annual Report by the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies of the proceedings of the Registrars under the Building Societies Acts ; with an abstract of the annual accounts and statements of the societies for the year 1903 306

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Order, dated 23rd September, 1903, entitled the Foreign Animals (Amendment) Order of 1903 (No. 3).

Order, dated 2nd February, 1904, defining a foreign animals quarantine station at the port of Southampton 306

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Annual Accounts of Exchequer Bills and other Government Securities purchased.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table .. 307

THE FISCAL QUESTION.

The Earl of Wemyss 307
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 307

On Question, Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, THURSDAY, 4th FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Acton Improvement Bill.—" To confer upon the Urban District Council of Acton further powers with regard to the supply of electricity and the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 308

Amersham, Beaconsfield, and District Water Bill.—To extend the limits of supply of the Amersham, Beaconsfield, and District Waterworks Company, Limited, and to confer further powers upon that Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 308

Arlesey Gas Bill.—" For extending the limits of supply of the Arlesey Gas Company; for the raising of additional capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 308

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill.—" To authorise the Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Company to acquire additional lands; to confer further powers; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 308

Barnet District Gas and Water Bill.—" To enable the Barnet District Gas and Water Company to acquire additional lands, construct additional works, and raise further capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 308

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Bexhill Water and Gas Bill.—"To extend the limits of supply of the Bexhill Water and Gas Company; to authorise the Company to raise additional capital, and to construct additional waterworks; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 308

Birkdale Improvement Bill.—"To authorise the Urban District Council of Birkdale to acquire land to construct an outfall sewer, and to make further provision in regard to the health, local government, improvement, and finance of the urban district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 309

Bishop's Stortford and District Gas Bill.—"For incorporating and conferring powers on the Bishop's Stortford and District Gas Company," presented and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 309

Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill.—"To confer further powers on the Blyth and Cowpen Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 309

Brixham Gas Bill.—"For incorporating and conferring powers on the Brixham Gas Company," presented and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 309

Brymbo Water Bill.—"To authorise the Brymbo Water Comany to extend their limits of supply, to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 309

Carlisle Corporation Bill.—"To extend the boundaries of the city of Carlisle, to consolidate the parishes in the city into one parish, to make further and better provision for the health, good government, and improvement of the city; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 309

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill.—"For conferring further powers upon the Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.. 309

Cheshire Electricity and Power-Gas Bill.—"For incorporating and conferring powers on the Cheshire Electricity and Power-Gas Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 309

Chippenham Gas Bill.—"For incorporating and conferring powers on the Chippenham Gas Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 310

Colney Hatch Gas Bill.—"To authorise the Colney Hatch Gas Company to raise additional capital, to acquire lands, to enlarge their works, to alter the name of company, to amend their existing Acts; and for other purposes," presented and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 310

Corbridge Gas Bill.—"For incorporating and conferring powers on the Corbridge Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 310

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Corporation of London (Southwark and other Bridges) Bill.—" To empower the Corporation of London to rebuild Southwark Bridge, and to confer other powers upon them with respect to that and other bridges; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 310

Croydon Gas Bill.—" To change the name of Croydon Commercial Gas and Coke Company to 'the Croydon Gas Company,' and to confer further powers on the Company with respect to the raising of additional capital, the construction and maintenance of additional gas works; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 310

Crystal Palace District Gas Bill.—" To alter the provisions of the Acts of the Crystal Palace District Gas Company with respect to the illuminating power of gas supplied by them and the testing of gas; to change the name of the Company to 'the South Suburban Gas Company;' and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 310

Doncaster Corporation Bill.—" To confer further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of Doncaster with reference to their water, gas, and electricity undertakings; to make further and better provision with regard to the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the said borough; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 310

Donegal Railway Bill.—" To authorise the Donegal Railway company to raise further moneys by the creation and issue of guaranteed preference stock for the purpose, amongst others, of completing the Ballyshannon Extension, and to empower the Company to own and work motor-cars and other vehicles; and for other purposes," presented and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 311

East London and Lower Thames Electric Power Bill—" For incorporating and conferring powers on the East London and Lower Thames Electric Power Company," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 311

Felixstowe Gas Bill.—" To incorporate and confer powers upon the Felixstowe Gas Light Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 311

Gas Light and Coke and other Gas Companies Acts Amendment Bill.—" To amend the Gas Light and Coke and other Gas Companies Acts Amendment Act 1880; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 311

Gomersal Gas Bill.—" For consolidating the capital of the Gomersal Gas Company for enabling that Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 311

Great Central and Midland Joint Railways Bill.—" To constitute as a separate undertaking certain Railways of the Sheffield and Midland Railway Companies' Joint Committee and certain other Railways authorised to be constructed by the Great Central and Midland Railway Companies jointly; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 311

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Great Central Railway Bill.—" To authorise the construction of new works and the acquisition of lands by the Great Central Railway Company in connection with their undertakings; the construction of new Railways by the Cheshire Lines Committee and the Seaforth and Sefton Junction Railway Company respectively, and the acquisition of lands by the Great Western and Great Central Railways' Joint Committee and the Manchester South Junction and Altrincham Railway Company respectively in connection with their respective undertakings; the acquisition by the Great Central Railway Company of the undertakings of the Wrexham, Mold and Connah's Quay and Buckley Railway Companies; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 311

Great Eastern Railway Bill.—" For conferring further powers on the Great Eastern Railway Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 312

Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill.—" To amend the powers of the Great Eastern Railway Company with respect to the use of steam vessels," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 312

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.—" To extend the time for the completion of railways; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 312

Great Northern Railway Bill.—" To confer powers on the Great Northern Railway Company with reference to the construction of works and the purchase of lands; to extend the time limited for the compulsory purchase of certain lands by the Company; to empower the Company and the Great Central Railway Company to purchase lands, and to extend the time for the compulsory purchase of certain lands by those Companies; and for other purposes," presented and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 312

Hampton-in-Arden Gas Bill.—" To incorporate the Hampton-in-Arden and Meriden Gas Company and to enable that company to supply with gas certain parishes in the County of Warwick," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 312

Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill.—" To confer powers on the Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Company for widening and altering roads and acquiring lands in the counties of Middlesex and London; to authorise the sale of the undertaking of the company to the Metropolitan Electric Tramways, Limited, and to provide for the dissolution and winding-up of the Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 312

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill.—" To empower the Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Company to construct a new dock with connecting railway and other works and entrance into the River Humber; to abandon the dock and works authorised by the Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Act, 1901; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 313

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Kettering Improvement Bill.—"To make further and better provision with regard to the electric light undertaking of the Council, and for the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 313

Kirkby-in-Ashfield Urban District Gas Bill.—"To empower the Urban District Council of Kirkby-in-Ashfield to supply gas and to provide for the transfer to the Council of so much of the gas undertaking of the Sutton-in-Ashfield Urban District Council as is situate within the urban district of Kirkby-in-Ashfield; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 313

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill.—"To authorise the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company to provide and work steam vessels between the ports of Goole and Hull and certain Continental ports; and to subscribe to the funds of steamship companies; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 313

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Various Powers) Bill.—"To authorise the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company to construct new railways; to widen certain existing railways, and to construct other works; to acquire additional lands; and to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 313

Leeds Corporation (Consolidation) Bill.—"To consolidate, with Amendments, certain of the local Acts in force within the city of Leeds; to make further provision in regard to the various undertakings of the Corporation, and to make better provision for the health and local government of the city; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 314

Leyton Urban District Council Bill.—"To authorise the Urban District Council of Leyton, in the county of Essex, to construct and work tramways, and to confer further powers on the Council in regard to their tramways undertaking and their electrical undertaking; to empower the Council to execute certain street widenings, to provide for vesting in the Council certain lammas lands as open spaces and recreation grounds; to make further provision for the improvement, health, and local government of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 314

Lincolnshire and Yorkshire Electric Power Bill.—"For incorporating and conferring powers on the Lincolnshire and Yorkshire Electric Power Company," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 314

Littlestone-on-Sea and District Water Bill.—"For incorporating the Littlestone-on-Sea and District Water Company and empowering them to construct works and supply water; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 314

London and India Docks Company Bill.—"To facilitate the passage of traffic to and from the docks of the London and India Docks Company; to extend the time for the compulsory purchase of lands required for and for the completion of certain works; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 314

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London and North Western Railway Bill.—"For conferring further powers upon the London and North Western Railway Company in relation to their own undertaking, and upon that Company and the Great Western Railway Company in relation to their joint undertaking; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 315

London, Camberwell, and Dulwich Tramways Bill.—"To define the widening of Rye Lane, Peckham, referred to in the Peckham and East Dulwich Tramways Act, 1885 and 1887; and to confer further powers upon the London, Camberwell, and Dulwich Tramways Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 315

London County Council (General Powers) Bill—"To empower the London County Council to acquire lands for various purposes; to make provisions with respect to sanitary and other like matters; to authorise the exchange of certain land at Tooting Bec Common; to empower the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Woolwich to purchase lands for various purposes; to change the name of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade; to confer various powers upon the London County Council and upon the Councils of Metropolitan Boroughs; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read the second time 315

London Port and Docks Bill.—"To impose rates on goods imported into the Port of London, and to make provision for the improvement of the dock accommodation at, and the navigation of, the said Port; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 315

London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 315

Lytham Improvement Bill.—"To authorise the Urban District Council of Lytham to acquire Land to erect a Town Hall, to make further provision in regard to their gas undertaking, and to the health, local government, improvement, and finance of their district; and for other purposes," presented and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 315

Midland Railway Bill.—"To confer additional powers upon the Midland Railway Company and upon that Company and the Great Eastern Railway Company and upon the Midland and Great Northern Railways Joint Committee, and the Norfolk and Suffolk Joint Committee for the construction of works and acquisition of lands; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 316

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill.—"To empower the Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Company to make a deviation railway in the county of Westmeath and an extension railway in the county of Louth, and to enable that Company and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company to enter into working and other agreements; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 316

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North and South Woolwich Electric Railway Bill.—"For incorporating the North and South Woolwich Electric Railway Company, and for empowering them to construct a railway from North Woolwich to South Woolwich, in the counties of London and Essex; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time . . 316

North Staffordshire Railway Bill.—"To confer further powers on the North Staffordshire Railway Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 316

North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill.—"For conferring further powers on the North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 316

Norwich Water Bill.—"To empower the City of Norwich Waterworks Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills . . 316

Plymouth and North Devon Direct Railway (Abandonment) Bill.—"For the abandonment of the Plymouth and North Devon Direct Railway," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 317

Plymouth Corporation Bill.—"To confer further borrowing powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the borough of Plymouth," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 317

Radcliffe Tramway and Improvement Bill.—"To confer on the Urban District Council to Radcliffe further powers with regard to their tramways undertaking; to construct new tramways and street improvements; to extend the Town's Yard; and to make further provision in regard to the supply of electricity, and for the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 317

Reading Corporation Bill.—"To authorise an increase in the public libraries and museums' rates in the borough of Reading; to provide for the establishment of a superannuation fund; to make further provision in regard to the health, local government, and improvement of the said borough; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 317

Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Bill.—"For extending the limits of supply of the Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 317

Ryde Gas Bill.—"For conferring further powers upon the Ryde Gaslight Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 317

Saddleworth and Springhead Tramways (Abandonment) Bill.—"For the abandonment of the Saddleworth and Springhead Tramways; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 317

St. Marylebone Electric Lighting Bill.—For conferring further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors of the metropolitan borough of St. Marylebone with regard to the supply of electricity; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 318

Selby Urban District Council Bill.—"To enable the Urban District Council of Selby to construct new waterworks and to make further provision with regard to their market, water, and gas undertakings, to enable them to rate and acquire Selby Bridge, and for the improvement, health, and local government of the district," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 318

Sheffield, Laughton, and Maltby Railway Bill.—"For making railways in the West Riding of the county of York; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 318

Sheppy Gas Bill.—"For consolidating the capital of, and for conferring further powers on, the Sheppy Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 318

Skipton Water and Improvement Bill.—"To authorise the Urban District Council of Skipton to construct additional waterworks; to extend their limits of supply; and to make further provision with regard to the supply of electricity, and for the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 318

Soothill Nether Urban District Tramways Bill.—"To enable the Soothill Nether Urban District Council to make and maintain tramways and street improvements; to acquire land for the purpose of a refuse destructor; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 318

Southend-on-Sea Gas Bill.—"For conferring further powers on the Southend Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 318

Southend Water Bill.—"To empower the Southend Waterworks Company to raise further capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills .. 318

South Shields Gas Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the South Shields Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 319

South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.—"To extend the time limited for the compulsory purchase of lands for and completion of the railways and works authorised by the South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway Act, 1901; and for other purposes," presented and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 319

Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill.—"To empower the Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Company to construct railways in the Counties of Tyrone and Donegal; to change the name of the Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills. 319

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Surrey Commercial Dock Bill.—"To authorise the Surrey Commercial Dock Company to raise further capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 319

Sutton Gas Bill.—"For conferring further powers upon the Sutton Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 319

Swindon Corporation Bill.—"To enable the Corporation of the Borough of Swindon to make new tramways, and to make further provisions with reference to markets, and for the health, local government, and improvement of the borough; and for other pruposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time. 319

Thames River Steamboat Service Bill.—"To provide for the acquisition and construction of piers and landing places on the River Thames in the Administrative County of London by the London County Council, and to make provision for a service of vessels for passengers and parcels; and for other purposes presented," and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.. 319

Thames Steamboat Trust Bill.—"To incorporate trustees for the maintenance of a service of steamboats on the River Thames to transfer to them the undertaking to the Thames Steamboat Company (1897), Limited, to provide for the transfer of them of certain piers on the River Thames, and for the guarantee by the London County Council of interest on moneys to be borrowed by the trustees; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 320

Thurles Urban District Council Water Bill.—"To authorise the Urban District Council of Thurles, in the County of Tipperary, to construct waterworks for the supply of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time 320

Tottenham Improvement Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Urban District Council for the District of Tottenham in the County of Middlesex," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time .. 320

Watford and District Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill.—"To extend the time for the compulsory purchase of lands, and for the construction of the tramways authorised by the Watford and District Tramways Act, 1901; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 320

Wellington (Somerset) Gas Bill.—"For incorporating and conferring powers on the Wellington (Somerset) Gas Company; and for other purposes," presented and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 320

Whitby Gas Bill.—"To confer further powers upon the Whitby Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 320

Wolverhampton Corporation Bill.—"To empower the Corporation of Wolverhampton to construct tramways, and to make further provision in regard to their tramway, electricity, and market undertakings, and the health, local government, and improvement of their borough; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time .. 320

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DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.—Copy presented, of an Order defining a foreign animals quarantine station at the port of Southampton [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 323

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).—Copy presented, of the Postal Order (Inland) Amendment Regulations, 1903, dated 14th September, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 323

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FUND, 1902–3.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd February; *Mr. Victor Cavendish*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 26.] 323

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NATIONAL GALLERY (REPORT).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd February; *Mr. Victor Cavendish*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 28.] 323

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS).—Appropriation Accounts presented, for the year ending 31st March, 1903, together with the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon and certain Reports upon Store Accounts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 29.] 324

ROYAL PARKS AND GARDENS.—Copy presented, of Provisional Rules for the Royal Parks and Gardens in connection with the Regulations prescribed by the Parks Regulation Act, 1872 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 324

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GOVERNMENT TARIFF POLICY.—Questions, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answers, Mr. Akers Douglas .. 360

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS). [THIRD DAY.]—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [2nd February] " That an humble Address be presented as followeth :—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign,—*

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Question again proposed.

Mr. Hugh Law (*Donegal, W.*) 361
The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Earl Percy, Kensington, S.*) 363
Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeen, S.*) 371
Sir Mark Stewart (*Kirkcudbrightshire*) 375
Mr. Robson (*South Shields*) 375
Dr. Macnamara (*Camberwell, N.*) 399

Amendment proposed—

" At the end of the Question, to add the words ' But humbly represent to Your Majesty that the facts now made known in regard to the preparations for and conduct of the recent War in South Africa, and particularly the evidence taken by Your Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into those matters and their Report thereon, disclose grave negligence and mismanagement on the part of Your Majesty's Ministers, whereby the duration, magnitude, and cost of the war were greatly increased.' "—(*Mr. Robson.*)

Question proposed, " That these words be there added."

The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Wyndham, Dover*) 411
Sir A. Hayter (*Walsall*) 426

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [4th February] to Main Question [2nd February]. " That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign,—*

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

" At the end of the Question, to add the words, ' But humbly represent to Your Majesty that the facts now made known in regard to the preparations for and conduct of the recent war in South Africa, and particularly the evidence taken by Your Majesty's Commissioners

appointed to inquire into those matters and their Report thereon, disclose grave negligence and mismanagement on the part of Your Majesty's Ministers, whereby the duration, magnitude, and cost of the war were greatly increased.' "—(*Mr. Robson.*)

Question again proposed, " That those words be there added."

Mr. Duke (Plymouth) 432
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 436
Mr. J. Chamberlain (Birmingham, W.) 449

Motion made, and Question, " That the debate be now adjourned "—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at five minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PETITIONS.

Courts of Arbitration for all States.—Petition from Calne, for establishment; to lie upon the Table 469

Licences (Renewal).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Warrington (two); Bristol; Lancaster; Norton Canes; Radnor Park; Rochdale; Bethania; Ceunant Llanrug; Penygroes; Cesarea; Croesywaen; Liverpool (six); Glasgow (four); Edinburgh (two); Tuxford; Posselpark; Hackney; Garston; Misterton; Spennymoor; New Shildon; Leicester; Gilfach; Clatford; Cholderton; Broughton; Whitchurch; Micheldever; Stockbridge; Mottram; Hartlepool; Torpoint; St. Anthonys; Winnington; Runcorn; Redruth; Camborne; Whittlesey; Atherstone; Pollokshaws; Marsden; Jarrow; Hebburn (two); Bill Quay; Kidderminster; Plumstead; Hanging Heaton; Middleton; Castleton; Exeter (two); Coatbridge; Glenboig; Whifflet; Penzance; Sancreed; Sennen; St. Mary's; Scilly; Halton Chirk; Coatdyke; Portmadoc; Penygroes; Rhyd-ddu; Nazareth; Talysarn; Cae Athraw; Tan y Coed; Hyfrydle; Tainant; Llandynan; Llanrug (six); Glanrhyd; Prenteg; Notting Hill; Sheffield; Middlesbrough (two); Todmorden; Frome; Grangetown; North Ormesby; Arreton; Newchurch; Sandown; Niton; Freshwater; Newport; Clapham; Navenby; Willington; Belmont; Stillington; Gateshead (two); Low Fell; Dunfermline; Cheltenham; Raunds; Brigstock; Woodford; Langley Moor; Llanfairfechan (two); Graig; Clegyr; Llanfyllin; Cwmyglo; Cleveland; Huntingdon; Kilbarchan; Scotstoun; Bridge of Weir; Nitshill; Pangbourne; Ashbourne; Trefeirig; Wootton; Cwmorfin; Bwlchydderwen; Cwmsynog; Aberporth; Nantperis; Llandudno; Cefn Mawr; Pendleton (two); Birkenhead; Sedbergh; Penmachno; Pentir; Preswylfa; Tynmaes; Gerlan; Waenpentre; Rhiwlas (two); Lochgelly; Lincoln (two); Bedwas; Great Ayton; Camberwell; Everton; Wrexham; Waenfawr; Coupar Angus; Burradon; Weston-super-Mare; Lytchett Minster; Hollington; Bridlington; York; York and Scarborough; Poole and Parkstone; and Caersalem; to lie upon the Table 469

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday.—Petition from Weymouth, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table 470

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

GREENWICH OBSERVATORY.—Copy presented, of Report of the Astronomer Royal to the Board of Visitors of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 470

NAVY (COURTS MARTIAL).—Copy presented, of Return of the number of Courts Martial held and Summary Punishments inflicted during the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 470

WAR OFFICE (RECONSTITUTION) COMMITTEE.—Copy presented, of Report of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 470

EAST INDIA (THIBET).—Copy presented, of Papers relating to Thibet by Command]; to lie upon the Table 470

TRANSVAAL.—Copy presented, of Telegraphic Correspondence relating to the Transvaal Labour Importation Ordinance, with Appendix, the Ordinance as amended in accordance with Telegrams [by Command]; to lie upon the Table] 470

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the borough of Maidstone, in the county of Kent (Maidstone Corporation Light Railways Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 471

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Robertsbridge and Pevensey Light Railway Order, 1900 (Robertsbridge and Pevensey Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 471

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the urban districts of Quarry Bank, Brierley Hill, and Rowley Regis, in the county of Stafford (Quarry Bank, Brierley Hill, and Rowley Regis Light Railway Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 471

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the parishes of Acton, Edgware, Edmonton, Enfield, Finchley, Friern Barnet, Hendon, Hornsey, Little Stanmore, Southgate, Tottenham, Wembley, Willesden, and Wood Green, in the county of Middlesex (County of Middlesex Light Railways Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 471

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the county of Hertford, in the parish of Watford urban and the urban district of Watford (Watford and District Light Railways Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 471

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COMPANIES (WINDING-UP).—Copy presented, of General Rules made pursuant to The Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890, and the Judicature Act, 1881 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 472

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1. Intermediate Education (Ireland), Accounts of Receipts and Expenditure for 1902, with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 32.]
2. Richmond Bridge. Cash Account for the year 1902 [by Act] 472

BREWERS' LICENCES.—

Return ordered, "of Accounts of the number of persons in each of the several Collections of the United Kingdom licensed as brewers for sale, *i.e.* Common Brewers, Victuallers, Retailers of beer to be drunk on the premises, Retailers of beer not to be drunk on the premises, and Brewers of beer not for sale, particularising each class in each Collection; and of the number of Licences issued to Victuallers and Retailers of beer to be drunk on the premises and not to be drunk on the premises; and stating also the quantities of malt, unmalted corn, rice, &c., sugar, including its equivalent of syrups, &c., hops and hop substitutes, used by Brewers of beer for sale, and of malt and sugar used by Brewers not for sale, from the 1st day of October, 1902, to the 30th day of September, 1903.

"Of the amount of Licence Duty paid and Beer Duty charged from the 1st day of October, 1902, to the 30th day of September, 1903, distinguishing Brewers for sale from other Brewers.

"Of the number of Brewers for sale (i.) who use malt and hops, or hop substitutes only and (ii.) who use malt with substitutes for same and hops or hop substitutes paying for Licences, from the 1st day of October, 1902, to the 30th day of September, 1903, separating them into classes, according to the number of barrels of beer charged with duty calculated at 1·055 degrees gravity—viz., under 1,000 barrels; 1,000 and under 10,000; 10,000 and under 20,000; 20,000 and under 30,000; 30,000 and under 50,000; 50,000 and under 100,000; 100,000 and under 150,000; 150,000 and under 200,000; 200,000 and under 250,000; 250,000 and under 300,000; 300,000 and under 350,000; 350,000 and under 400,000; 400,000 and under 450,000; 450,000 and under 500,000; 500,000 and under 600,000; 600,000 and under 700,000; 700,000 and under 800,000; 800,000 and under 900,000; 900,000 and under 1,000,000; 1,000,000 and under 1,500,000; 1,500,000 and under 2,000,000; 2,000,000 barrels and over; showing separately, in each class, the quantities of malt, unmalted corn, rice, &c., sugar including its equivalent of syrups, &c., hops and hop substitutes used; and stating also the number of bulk barrels of beer produced, and the amount of Licence Duty paid and Beer Duty charged in each class."

"And, of the number of barrels of beer exported from the United Kingdom, and the declared value thereof, and where exported to, from the 1st day of October, 1902, to the 30th day of September, 1903, distinguishing England, Scotland, and Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 40, of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) .. 472

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ASSESSMENT OF WORKING MEN'S COTTAGES.—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 475

TRADE "CORNERS"—GOVERNMENT ACTION.—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, Earl Percy 476

FOREIGN MINISTRIES OF COMMERCE.—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford); Answer, Earl Percy 476

EXPORTS OF WOOLLEN, COTTON GOODS, ETC., FROM FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN.—Question, Mr. J. A. Pease; Answer, Mr. Bonar Law 476

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ALLEGED ATROCITIES IN THE CONGO STATE.—Question, Mr. J. A. Pease; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 479

NEW BILLS.

Musical Copyright Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the Musical Copyright," presented by Mr. Mount; supported by Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Galloway, and Mr. Malcolm; to be read a second time upon Friday, 26th February, and to be printed. [Bill 1.] 480

Town Tenants (Ireland) Bill.—"For the improvement of the position of Tenants in Towns in Ireland," presented by Mr. MacVeagh; supported by Mr. Field, Captain Donelan, Mr. William McKillop, Mr. Joseph Devlin, Mr. Joyce, Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. John O'Donnell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th March, and to be printed. [Bill 2] .. 480

Land Values (Assessment and Rating) Bill.—"To provide for the separate Assessment and Rating of Land Values," presented by Mr. Trevelyan; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. William Jones, Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. McCrae, Dr. Macnamara, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Whitley; to be read a second time upon Friday, 11th March, and to be printed. [Bill 3] 480

Railways (Private Sidings) Bill.—"To explain and amend Section 76 of the Railways Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and Section 69 of the Railways Clauses Consolidation (Scotland) Act, 1845, and to amend the Railway and Canal Traffic Acts, 1854 to 1888," presented by Sir John Brunner; supported by Mr. Channing, Mr. Alexander Cross, Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Mr. Field, Sir Alfred Hickman, Mr. Kerr, Mr. Charles McArthur, Mr. Stroyan, Sir William Tomlinson, and Mr. Ure; to be read a second time upon Friday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 4] 481

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Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill.—" To amend the outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies) Act, 1894," presented by Mr. Reginald Lucas; supported by Mr. Butcher, Sir Carne Rasch, Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore, and Mr. Charles Seely; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 5] 481

Weights and Measures Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to Weights and Measures," presented by Mr. Bousfield; supported by Mr. Parker Smith and Sir John Brunner; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th April, and to be printed. [Bill 6] 481

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister," presented by Mr. Charles Seely; supported by Sir Gilbert Parker, Sir Brampton Gurdon, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, Mr. Hambro, Mr. Matthew White Ridley, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. MacIver, Mr. Mellor, Mr. Charles Shaw, Sir Barrington Simeon, and Mr. Melville; to be read a second time upon Friday, 19th February, and to be printed. [Bill 7] 481

Trades Unions and Trade Disputes Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to Trades Unions and Trades Disputes," presented by Mr. Paulton; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Robson, Mr. Beaumont, Mr. D. A. Thomas, Mr. Johnson, Mr. John Burns, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Runciman, and Mr. Jacoby; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd April, and to be printed. [Bill 8] 481

Local Government (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill.—" To amend the Local Government (Ireland) Acts," presented by Mr. Field; supported by Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Patrick Aloysius McHugh, Mr. John O'Donnell, Mr. Reddy, Mr. Roche, and Mr. Kilbride; to be read a second time upon Friday, 29th April, and to be printed. [Bill 9] 482

Registration of Clubs (Ireland) Bill.—" To provide for the Registration of Clubs in Ireland, and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. O'Neill; supported by Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. John Gordon, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. McGovern, Mr. T. W. Russell, Dr. Thompson, and Mr. Wolff; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 10] 482

Merchant Shipping (Lighthouses) Bill.—" To amend the Law with regard to Lighthouses and to abolish Light Dues," presented by Mr. Plummer; supported by Mr. Charles McArthur, Mr. Evelyn Cecil, Colonel Denny, Sir Francis Evans, Mr. Field, Sir John Leng, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Renwick, Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Robert Ropner, and Mr. Charles Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th May, and to be printed. [Bill 11] .. 482

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.—" To limit the hours of underground workers in Mines to Eight Hours per day from bank to bank," presented by Mr. Osmond Williams; supported by Sir Charles Dilke, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Jacoby, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Norman, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Mr. William Jones, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Hatch, and Mr. Nussey; to be read a second time upon Friday, 26th February, and to be printed. [Bill 12] 482

Hall-Marking of Foreign Plate Bill.—" To amend the Law with respect to the Hall-Marking of Foreign Plate," presented by Mr. Samuel Roberts; supported by Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Sir Benjamin Stone, Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Mr. Remnant, and Mr. Norman; to be read a second time upon Friday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 13] 482

Leaseholds Enfranchisement Bill.—" For the Enfranchisement of Leaseholds," presented by General Laurie ; supported by Mr. Spear, Mr. Cohen, Sir George Fardell, and Mr. Louis Sinclair ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th March, and to be printed. [Bill 14] 483

Ministry of Commerce Bill.—" To establish a bureau for a Minister of Commerce," presented by Mr. Louis Sinclair ; supported by Sir Albert Rollit, Sir William Holland, Sir John Brunner, Sir Howard Vincent, Sir Ernest Flower, Sir Fortescue Flannery, and Sir Joseph Lawrence ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd June, and to be printed. [Bill 15] 483

Tuberculosis (Animals) Compensation Bill.—" To provide for the payment of compensation to the owners of carcases of animals condemned after slaughter and destroyed by order of a magistrate on account of Tuberculosis," presented by Mr. Price ; supported by Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Tomkinson, Mr. McArthur, Mr. Field, Mr. Batty Langley, and Mr. Ernest Gray ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th April, and to be printed. [Bill 16] 483

Aged Pensioners Bill.—" To provide Pensions for the Aged Deserving Poor," presented by Mr. Remnant ; supported by Mr. Goulding, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. John Hutton, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. Claude Hay, Colonel Kemp, Mr. Maconochie, Mr. Forde Ridley, and Mr. Groves ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 17] 483

Re-Vaccination Bill.—" To provide for the Re-vaccination of Children after the age of twelve," presented by Sir John Tuke ; supported by Sir Michael Foster, Mr. Haldane, Dr. Farquharson, Captain Jessel, Mr. Malcolm, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Moon, Sir Charles Dalrymple, and Sir John Dorington ; to be read a second time upon Monday, 25th April, and to be printed. [Bill 18] 483

Private Legislation Procedure (Wales) Bill.—" To provide for improving and extending the Procedure for obtaining Parliamentary Powers by way of Provisional Orders in matters relating to Wales," presented by Mr. Vaughan-Davies ; supported by Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Mr. Osmond Williams, Sir Alfred Thomas, and Mr. Kenyon ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 19.] 484

Church Discipline Bill.—" To amend the Church Discipline Act, 1840, and the Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874," presented by Sir John Willox ; supported by Mr. Charles McArthur, Mr. Austin Taylor, Mr. Mellor, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. David MacIver, Mr. Brand, and Mr. W. W. Rutherford ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 10th June, and to be printed. [Bill 20.] 484

Local Taxation Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to the incidence of Local Taxation," presented by Mr. Cripps ; supported by Mr. Wharton and Mr. Henry Hobhouse ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th May, and to be printed. [Bill 21.] 484

Prevention of Pollution of Rivers and Streams Bill.—" To make further and amended provision to prevent the Pollution of Rivers and Streams," presented by Sir Francis Sharp Powell ; supported by Sir Wilson Todd, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Sir John Dorington, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Brigg, Sir John Brunner, and Sir Walter Foster ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd April, and to be printed. [Bill 22.] 484

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Aged Pensioners (No. 2) Bill.—" To provide Pensions for the aged deserving poor," presented by Mr. Goulding; supported by Mr. Remnant, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. John Hutton, Colonel Kemp, Mr. Duke, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Carlile, Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. Samuel Roberts, and Sir Albert Rollit; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd June, and to be printed. [Bill 23.] 485

Old Age Pensions Bill.—" To provide Pensions for the aged deserving poor," presented by Mr. Spear; supported by Mr. Duke, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Goulding, Colonel Williams, and Mr. Randles; to be read a second time upon Friday, 26th February, and to be printed. [Bill 24.] .. 485

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill.—" To give the Ratepayers a direct Veto on the Liquor Traffic in their respective areas in Scotland," presented by Mr. Hunter Craig; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Black, Sir William Dunn, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Robert Wallace, Mr. John Hope, and Dr. Farquharson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 29th April, and to be printed. [Bill 25.] 485

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—" To prohibit the sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday," presented by Mr. Perks; supported by Mr. Charles Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th May, and to be printed. [Bill 26.] 485

Shops Bill.—" To amend the Poor Law relating to Shops," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. John Burns, Sir Ernest Flower, Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Mr. Lloyd-George, Colonel Kemp, Mr. McCrae, Mr. Melville, Mr. Nannetti, Sir Barrington Simeon, and Mr. Tennant; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 27.] 485

Franchise and Removal of Woman's Disabilities Bill.—" To establish a single Franchise at all Elections and thereby to abolish University Representation, and to remove the Disabilities of Women," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Logan, Dr. Macnamara, Captain Norton, and Mr. Shackleton; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 28.] 485

Irish Tobacco Bill.—" To repeal the Law which prohibits the growing of Tobacco in Ireland," presented by Mr. William Redmond; supported by Mr. Hayden, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Charles Devlin, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, and Mr. Joyce; to be read a second time upon Friday, 29th April, and to be printed. [Bill 29.] 486

Local Authorities (Taxation and Purchase of Land) Bill.—" To provide for the Taxation and Purchase of Land by Local Authorities," presented by Mr. Logan; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Harwood, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Toulmin, and Mr. Logan; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 30.] 486

Colonial Marriages Bill.—" To legalise certain Colonial Marriages," presented by General Laurie; supported by Mr. Rothschild, Mr. Arthur Stanley, Sir Gilbert Parker, and Captain Jessel; to be read a second time upon Friday, 19th February, and to be printed. [Bill 31.] 486

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Medical Act (1886) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Medical Act, 1886," presented by General Laurie; supported by Sir Walter Foster, Sir John Tuke, Mr. Rothschild, Sir Howard Vincent, and Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree; to be read a second time upon Friday, 19th February, and to be printed. [Bill 32.] 486

Merchandise Marks Bill.—"To amend the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by Sir Carne Rasch, Sir Henry Seton-Karr, and Mr. Field; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 33.] 486

Private Trustee Bill.—"To provide for the appointment of a Public Trustee and Executor," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by Mr. H. D. Greene, Mr. Howard, and Lieutenant-Colonel Tufnell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 19th February, and to be printed. [Bill 34.] 486

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Saturdays (Ireland) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the sale of intoxicating liquors in Ireland on Saturdays; and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. Sloan; supported by Sir James Haslett, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. T. L. Corbett, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, and Mr. Wood; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th May, and to be printed. [Bill 35.] 487

Agricultural Holdings Bill.—"To amend the Agricultural Holdings Acts and to make other provisions as to the Tenure of Agricultural Land," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Price, Mr. Harold Reckitt, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Lambert; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 36.] 487

Old Age Pensions (No. 2) Bill.—"To provide Pensions for persons over sixty-five years of age," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Broadhurst, and Sir Albert Rollit; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 16th February and to be printed. [Bill 37.] 487

Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatilities) Bill.—To amend the Law relating to Coroners' Inquests in the case of Fatal Accidents on Railways," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, and Mr. Schwann; to be read a second time upon Monday, 15th February, and to be printed. [Bill 38.] 487

Savings Banks Acts Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Savings Banks Acts," presented by Sir Albert Rollit; supported by Sir Frederick Banbury, Sir James Woodhouse, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Broadhurst, Sir Brampton Gurdon, Sir William Holland, Mr. John Campbell, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Sir George Bartley, and Mr. Edmund Faber; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 39.] 487

Small Holders (Scotland) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the tenure of Small Holdings in Scotland," presented by Mr. Black; supported by Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Weir, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Harmsworth, Mr. J. D. Hope, and Mr. Ainsworth; to be read a second time upon Friday, 17th June, and to be printed. [Bill 40.] 488

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Sunday Closing (Wales) Act (1881) Amendment Bill.—" To amend The Sunday Closing (Wales) Act, 1881, and to make further provisions respecting the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors in Wales and Monmouthshire," presented by Mr. Herbert Roberts; supported by Sir Alfred Thomas, Mr. Herbert Lewis, and Mr. William Jones; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th March, and to be printed. [Bill 41.] 488

ADJOURNMENT.—Resolved, That this House, at its rising this day, do adjourn till Monday next.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*) 488

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS). [FOURTH DAY.]—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [4th February] to Main Question [2nd February], " That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign*—

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

" At the end of the Question, to add the words, ' But humbly represent to Your Majesty that the facts now made known in regard to the preparations for and conduct of the recent war in South Africa, and particularly the evidence taken by Your Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into those matters and their Report thereon, disclose grave negligence and mismanagement on the part of Your Majesty's Ministers, whereby the duration, magnitude, and cost of the war were greatly increased."—(*Mr. Robson*).

Question again proposed, " That those words be there added."

Sir H. Campbell Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*). 489
Mr. J. Chamberlain (*Birmingham, W.*) 499
The Secretary of State for India (*Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford*) .. 503
Mr. Charles Hobhouse (*Bristol, E.*) 514
Sir Carne Rasch (*Essex, Chelmsford*) 520
Captain Norton (*Newington, W.*) 522
Colonel Welby (*Taunton*) 530
Mr. J. S. Ainsworth (*Argyllshire*) 533
Sir George Bartley (*Islington, W.*) 534
Mr. Frederick Wilson (*Norfolk, Mid.*) 535
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.*) .. 537

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 192; Noes, 278. (Division List, No. 1.)

Main Question again proposed.

Motion made, and Question, " That the debate be now adjourned "—(*Mr. Joseph Walton*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Adjourned at twenty-three minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS, MONDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [H.L.]; Barrow-in-Furness Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Belfast and North East Ireland Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]; Belfast Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]; Bridlington Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Buxton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Chesterfield Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]; Chesterfield Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Derwent Valley Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Ebbw Vale Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Edwardes Square Protection Bill [H.L.]; Elysée Palace Hotel Company Bill [H.L.]; Filey Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Great Yarmouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Harrogate Waterworks Tramroad Bill [H.L.]; Holywood Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]; Hutcheson's Hospital and Hutcheson's Educational Trust Bill [H.L.]; Ipswich Dock Commission Bill [H.L]. ; King's College Hospital Bill [H.L.]; Leeds Corporation (Water works) Railway Bill [H.L.]; Liverpool and Wigan Churches Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Maidenhead Bridge Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation (General Powers) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Milwr and District Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Minehead Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Oakengates, Dawley, and District Joint Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Preston and Blackburn Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Preston Corporation Water Bill [H.L.]; St. Bartholomew's Hospital Bill [H.L.]; St. Mary Woolnoth Bill [H.L.]; Shipley Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Stretford Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Ulster Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Weaver Navigation (Additional Finance) Bill [H.L.]; Weaver Navigation (Constitution and Finance Bill [H.L.]; Withnell Gas Bill [H.L.]; Presented, and read 1a. 557

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.]; Barnard Castle Gas Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Extension of Time, etc.) Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Gosport Water Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Isle of Thanet Light Railways Bill [H.L.]; Lancashire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Ship Canal Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Ship Canal (Finance) Bill [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Railway Bill [H.L.]; Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle and Gateshead Water Bill [H.L.]; New River Company Bill [H.L.]; New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company Bill [H.L.]; North Wales Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway Bill [H.L.]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Ticehurst and District Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]; Trafford Park Dock and Railway Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Victoria University of Manchester Bill [H.L.]; Victoria University of Yorkshire Bill [H.L.]; West

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Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment) Bill [H.L.]; West Metropolitan Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [H.L.]; West Riding Tramways Bill [H.L.]; York Town and Blackwater Gas Bill [H.L.]; Presented; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners . 558

Coulsdon Tramways Bill.—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with 558

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Trade Reports (Annual).—No. 3118. Italy (South Italy); No. 3119. Denmark 559

Navy.—Returns of the number of courts-martial held and summary punishments inflicted on seamen of the Royal Navy, etc., during the year 1902 .. 559

Greenwich Observatory.—Report of the Astronomer-Royal to the Board of Visitors of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, read at the annual visitation of the Royal Observatory, 6th June, 1903 559

India.—(Thibet): Papers relating to Thibet; (Tariff): Views of the Government of India on the question of Preferential Tariffs 559

Transvaal.—Telegraphic correspondence relating to the Transvaal Labour Importation Ordinance, with Appendix; the Ordinance as amended in accordance with telegrams (in continuation of [Cd. 1895], Feb., 1904). .. 559

Army (Imperial Yeomanry).—Training return of Imperial Yeomanry in Great Britain and Ireland for 1903.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.. 559

Intermediate Education (Ireland).—Accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland for the year ended 31st December, 1902; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon 559

Superannuation—Treasury Minutes.—Dated 12th August, 1903, granting a retired allowance to Theophilus Evans, inspector of postmen and telegraph messengers, Worcester Post Office.

Dated 2nd October, 1903, granting a retired allowance to Commander Francis Alford, Navigating Commander H.M.T.S. "Monarch" Post Office.

Dated 19th October, 1903, granting a retired allowance to Charles Hasdell, third-class clerk in the Engineer-in-Chief's Department, Post Office.

Dated 19th October, 1903, granting a retired allowance to James Ruttley, late overseer and senior telegraphist, Central Telegraph Office, London.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 559

Richmond Bridge.—Account of the Commissioners of Richmond Bridge for the year ended 25th December, 1902. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 560

Post Office (Telegraphs).—Account showing the gross amount received, and the gross amount expended, in respect of the Telegraph Service from the date of the transfer of the telegraphs to the State to the 31st day of March, 1902 (in continuation of No. 31, of Session 1903). The Order of Thursday last, that the said account to lie on the Table, discharged 560

House adjourned at Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 8th February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Private Bills (Standing Order 62 Compiled with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been compiled with, viz. :—Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill; Gomersal Gas Bill; Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill; South Shields Gas Bill; South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Sutton Gas Bill; Whitby Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.. 560

Private Bills (Standing Order 63 Complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—Bishop's Stortford and District Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 561

Private Bills (Standing Order 62 not Complied with).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has not been complied with, viz. :—Ryde Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 561

PETITIONS.

Confessional at St. Paul's, Bedford.—Petition from Bedford, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 561

Licences (Renewal).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Camden Town; Barrow-in-Furness; Moss Side; Fowey; Maerdy; Cargreen; Bradford; Blackwood; Woodside; Sutcombe; Eastnor; Govan (three); Bedford; Stewarton; Ardrossan; Blackpool; West Bridgford; Southampton (two); Northumberland; Bedlington Colliery; Martock; Pembroke; Kilwinning; Mottram; Glossop (two); Clifton; Bishopsgate; Beuhar; Thorniewood; Motherwell; Holytown; Shotts; Skelton; Bellshill; New Stevenston; Craigneuk; Greenock; Torry; Rochester; Newcastle; Bates Cottages; Ashbourne; Clapham Road; Blackburn (two); Woolston; Ormskirk; Prescot; Crainford; Crawford; Waterloo; Hatton; Preston-on-the-Hill; Stockton Heath; Wilmslow; Lostock Gralam; Boxmoor Hall; Strickland; Great Ayton; Higher Broughton and Hoghton; to lie upon the Table .. 561

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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

East India (Tariffs).—Copy presented, of Views of the Government of India on the question of Preferential Tariffs [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 562

Pilotage.—Copy presented, of Abstract of Returns relating to Pilots and Pilotage in the United Kingdom (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 312, of Session 1902) as furnished by the various Pilotage Authorities [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 33.] 562

Life Assurance Companies.—Copy presented, of Statements of Accounts, and of Life Assurance and Annuity Business and Abstracts of Actuarial Reports deposited with the Board of Trade during the year ended 31st December, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 34.] .. 562

Army (Imperial Yeomanry).—Copy presented, of Training Return of Imperial Yeomanry for 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 562

Commons Act, 1876 (Oxshott Heath, Surrey).—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries upon an application for a Provisional Order for the regulation of Oxshott Heath, in the parish of Cobham, in the county of Surrey [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 35.] 562

Commons Act, 1876 (Merrow Downs, Surrey).—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries upon an application for a Provisional Order for the regulation of Merrow Downs, in the parish of Merrow, in the county of Surrey [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 36.] 562

Destructive Insects Act, 1877.—Copy presented, of an Order dated the 13th October, 1903, revoking the Orders of the Board of Agriculture under the Act dated respectively the 22nd August, 1901, the 31st May, 1902, and the 5th June, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 563

Brewers' Licences.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 5th February; *Mr. Victor Cavendish*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 37.] 563

Consolidated Fund.—Abstract Account presented, showing the issues made from the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom in the financial year ended 31st March, 1903, for the Interest and Management of the Debt, for the Civil List, and for all other Issues in the financial year for services charged directly on the said Fund; with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 38.] 563

Superannuation Act, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 12th August, 1903, granting to Theophilus Evans, Inspector of Postmen and Telegraph Messengers, Worcester Post Office, a retiring allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 563

Superannuation Act, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 19th October, 1903, granting to Charles Hasdell, 3rd Class Clerk in the Engineer-in-Chief's Department, Post Office, a retiring allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 563

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TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3118 to 3120 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 563

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 19th October, 1903, granting to James Ruttley, late Overseer and Senior Telegraphist, Central Telegraph Office, London, a retiring allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 564

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 2nd October, 1903, granting to Commander Francis Alford, Navigating Commander H.M.T.S. "Monarch," Post Office, a retiring allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 564

TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT THREE PER CENT. GUARANTEED STOCK.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 1st November, 1903, guaranteeing the payment of interest and repayment of principal of the Transvaal Government Three per cent. Guaranteed Stock [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 564

COMMITTALS (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Returns from the Clerks of the Crown and Peace of the number of persons committed for trial in 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 564

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Lunacy.—Copy of Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of Visits made and the number of Patients seen by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ending on the 31st December, 1903 [by Act] 564

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STANDING ORDERS.—Ordered, That the Select Committee on Standing Orders do consist of thirteen Members:—Sir John Brunner, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. John Edward Ellis, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Halsey, Mr. Humphreys-Owen, Mr. James Lowther, Sir James Rankin, Mr. William Redmond, Colonel Stopford-Sackville, Sir Mark M'Taggart Stewart, Mr. Whitmore, and Mr. Wodehouse were accordingly nominated Members of the Committee.—(*Mr. Halsey*) 599

SELECTION.—Mr. Blake, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir John Dorrington, Sir William Hart Dyke, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. McKenna, Sir Mark McTaggart Stewart, Mr. Wharton, and Mr. Wodehouse were nominated Members of the Committee of Selection with the Chairman of the Select Committee on Standing Orders.—(*Mr. Halsey*) 599

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NEW BILL.

Coal Mines Regulation Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Coal Mines," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Thomas Bayley, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Hatch, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Theodore Taylor, Mr. McKenna, and Mr. Herbert Lewis; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 42] 599

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—FIFTH DAY.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Main Question again proposed—

Mr. Joseph Walton (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley*) 600

Amendment proposed at the end of the Question to add the words—

"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is essential for the safeguarding and promotion of the commercial and political interests of the British Empire that adequate steps should be taken to maintain and extend our commercial treaty rights, and that the Consular Service should be reorganised and strengthened on lines calculated to make it more effective for the promotion of the trade of the British Empire."—(*Mr. Joseph Walton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Earl Percy, Kensington, S.*) 615

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

FISCAL POLICY.

Mr. John Morley (*Montrose Burghs*) 623

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House, that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm

and to the welfare of its population ; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well being."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question proposed, " That those words be there added."

The President of the Board of Trade (*Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central*) 644
Mr. Emmott (*Oldham*) 664

It being half-past Seven of the Clock the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

King's Speech (Motion for an Address).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February],

" That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty as followeth—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was.

" At the end of the Question to add the words, ' But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population ; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment and well-being." '—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, " That those words be there added."

Mr. Emmott 669
Sir M. Hicks Beach (*Bristol, W.*) 678
Mr. Haldane (*Haddingtonshire*) 695
Mr. Pike Pease (*Darlington*) 703

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

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HOUSE OF LORDS : TUESDAY, 9TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Torquay Tramways. The same was ordered to lie on the Table 709

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS : ANNUAL SERIES.—No. 3120. Finances of Italy for 1903. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 709

DESTRUCTIVE INSECTS ACT, 1877.—Order, dated 13th October, 1903, revoking the Orders of the Board of Agriculture under the Act, dated respectively 22nd August, 1901, 31st May, 1902, and 5th June, 1902. 709

COMMONS ACT, 1876.—Reports by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries upon an application for a Provisional Order for the regulation of Oxshott Heath, in the Parish of Cobham, in the county of Surrey ; Merrow Downs, in the parish of Merrow, in the county of Surrey 709

PRIVATE PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.—Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons, under Section 2 of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, That, having regard to Section 16 (2) of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, the provisions of the Clyde Valley Electrical Power Order ; the Govan Burgh (Electricity) Order ; the Lothians Electric Power Order ; and of Part V. of the Kirkcaldy Corporation Order ; are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bills and not by Provisional Orders.

That the provisions of the Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall Dock) Order ; the Clyde Navigation (Works) Order ; and of the Young and Bell's Patents Order; are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bills and not by Provisional Orders.

That, save as aforesaid, the Provisional Orders be allowed to proceed subject to such recommendations as may be hereafter made with respect to the several orders 710

LUNACY COMMISSION.—Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made and the number of patients seen, by the several Commissioners in Lunacy, during the six months ended 31st December, 1903 710

TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT THREE PER CENT. GUARANTEED STOCK.—Treasury Minute, dated 1st November, 1903, guaranteeing the payment of interest and repayment of principal of the Transvaal Government three per cent. Guaranteed Stock 710

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at a quarter before Four o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 9TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing **Order** No. 62 has been complied with, viz. :—Donegal Railway Bill; Norwich Water Bill; Southend Water Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time. 710

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH.)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :

Corbridge Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 711

Acton Improvement Bill.—Birkdale Improvement Bill; Carlisle Corporation Bill; Corporation of London (Southwark and other Bridges) Bill; Doncaster Corporation Bill. Read a second time, and committed 711

Hampton-in-Arden Gas Bill.—Read a second time, and committed .. 711

Kirkby-in-Ashfield Urban District Gas Bill.—Leeds Corporation (Consolidation) Bill; Leyton Urban District Council Bill; Littlestone-on-Sea and District Water Bill; London County Council (General) Powers Bill; Lytham Improvement Bill; Radcliffe Tramways and Improvement Bill; Reading Corporation Bill; Selby Urban District Council Bill; Sheffield. Laughton, and Maltby Railway Bill; Skipton Water and Improvement Bill; Soothill Nether Urban District Tramways Bill; Swindon Corporation Bill; Thames River Steamboat Service Bill; Thurles Urban District Council Water Bill; Tottenham Improvement Bill; Wolverhampton Corporation Bill. Read a second time, and committed 711

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill.—To confirm a Provisional Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Dumbarton Tramways, ordered to be brought in by The Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland 711

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Dumbarton Tramways," presented accordingly; and ordered to be considered upon Thursday 711

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill.—To confirm a Provisional Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Kilmarnock Corporation, ordered to be brought in by The Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland 711

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Kilmarnock Corporation," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 17th February, and to be printed. [Bill 43.] 712

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Weston super-Mare; Perth (two); Ryton on Tyne; Craghead; Chester le Street; Blaydon; Springwell; Swalwell; Bristol (two) Wellingborough; Moeladda Airdrie; Dewsbury; Uppermill; Lanark; Falkirk; Clifton; Woolwich; Lumley; Pendleton; Penygraig; Beddgelert; Capel Uchaf; Llancelhaian; Brynrhos; Bettws; Garn Carmel; Baladeulyn; Bwlan; Canterbury (two); Hylton Colliery; St. Ives; Salford; Eccles (two); Acton; Broad Chalke; Rochdale; Woodfalls; Hull; Gillingham; Chipping Sodbury; Urmston; Waterside; Port Isaac; Delabole; Moorside; Harrow Green; Wanstead; Dalkeith; Penygroes; Chelsea; Sowerby Bridge; Luddenden Penicuik; Liverpool; Abergorlech; Hill Top; West Calder; Loanhead Lancaster; Stanford le Hope; Barnstaple; Dyffryn; Ore; Nelson; Padiham; Runcorn; East Holywell; Appledore; Pegswood; Talybont; Winsford; Farnworth; Birkenhead; Leith (two); Tow Law; Crook; New Mills; Bucksburn; Coppenhall; Canonbury; Driffield; Stanford le Hope; Nelson (two); to lie upon the Table 712

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—Petition from Clitheroe, in favour, to lie upon the Table 712

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT THREE PER CENT. GUARANTEED STOCK.—Paper [presented 8th February] to be printed. [No. 39.] 712

SUMMARY JURISDICTION ACTS.—Copy presented, of Rule, dated 30th December, 1903, made by the Lord Chancellor, under Section 29 of The Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, as to the taking of recognisances by the Governor of a Prison [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 713

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.—Copy presented, of Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, that they are of opinion that the Clyde Valley Electrical Power Order; the Govan Burgh (Electricity) Order; the Lothians Electric Power Order; Part V. of the Kirkcaldy Corporation Order; the Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall Dock) Order; the Clyde Navigation (Works) Order; and the Young and Bell's Patents Orders ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 40.] 713

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).—Copy presented, of Statement of the Amounts due by the Public to Depositors on 31st March, 1901, and of the Receipts, Interest, and Disbursements during the year ended 31st March, 1902, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 41.].. 713

COMMONS (INCLOSURE AWARDS).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 23rd April, 1903; *Sir John Brunner*]; to lie upon the Table 713

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

I. Bank of England. Copy of all applications made by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England for advances to Government authorised by Parliament, from 5th January, 1903, to 5th January, 1904 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 42.]

2. Inquiry into Charities (County of Wilts.). Further Return, relative thereto [ordered 9th August, 1901; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 43.] 713

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LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND).—Return ordered, "showing the number of Cottages applied for in every Poor Law Union in Ireland under the latest completed scheme in connection with the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, together with the number of applications for extra half acres to cottages already under the Acts under said scheme; how many of these applications for cottages and extra half acres were sanctioned; the amount of expenses connected with such scheme; and in what way applied."—(*Mr. O'Shaughnessy.*) 714

THIBET (TRADE STATISTICS).—Address for "Return of Statistics relating to trade with Thibet since the date of the signing of the Convention of 1890, giving particulars regarding the quantity, classification, and value of the annual exports from British India to Thibet of (a) non-Indian merchandise; (b) of Indian merchandise; and (c) of exports from Thibet to British India."—(*Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree.*) 714

COAL EXPORTS, ETC.—Return ordered, "giving, for the year 1903, the export of Coal from each port in the United Kingdom to each Country Abroad, together with summary Statements showing the export of Coal in every period of three months from the principal districts of the United Kingdom to the principal groups of Foreign Countries; and also showing the quantity of Coal shipped at each Port in the United Kingdom for ships' use on Foreign voyages during the like periods (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 111 of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. D. A. Thomas*) 714

SUNDERLAND COUNTY BOROUGH (INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES).—Return ordered, "comprising (1) the Reports made to the Charity Commissioners, in the result of an Inquiry held in the county borough of Sunderland into endowments, subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trust Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part for the benefit of that county borough, or of any part thereof, together with the Reports on those endowments of the Commissioners for inquiring concerning Charities, 1818 to 1837; (2) a Digest showing whether any, and, if any, what such endowments are recorded in the books of the Charity Commissioners in the county borough; and (3) an Index, alphabetically arranged, of names and places mentioned in the Report."—(*Mr. Griffith-Boscawen.*)

GATESHEAD COUNTY BOROUGH (INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES).—Return ordered, "comprising (1) the Reports made to the Charity Commissioners, in the result of an inquiry held in the county borough of Gateshead into endowments, subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part for the benefit of that county borough, or of any part thereof, together with the Reports on those endowments of the Commissioners for inquiring concerning Charities, 1818 to 1837; and (2) a Digest showing whether any, and, if any, what such endowments are recorded in the books of the Charity Commissioners in the county borough; and (3) an Index alphabetically arranged of names and places mentioned in the Report."—(*Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*). .. ..

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

FACTORIES IN LONDON.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 715

LADY FACTORY INSPECTOR FOR THE POTTERIES.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 716

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UNEXPENDED BALANCES.—Question, Mr. J. F. Hope (Sheffield, Brightside); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 716

OPERATIONS OF IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.—Question, Mr. P. A. M'Hugh (Leitrim, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 717

DIVISION OF GRAZING FARM AT ISLAND, COUNTY MAYO.—Question, Mr. John O'Donnell (Mayo, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 717

RIGHT OF WAY ON GRAZING FARM AT ISLAND, COUNTY MAYO.—Question, Mr. John O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 718

IRISH POLICE ON DUTY AT RAILWAY STATION.—Question, Mr. John O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 718

CENSORSHIP OF PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 719

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

DE BEERS MINES, LIMITED.—Questions, Mr. Whitley (Halifax); Answers, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield) 719

ARMY CONTRACTS IN IRELAND.—Questions, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick) and Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answers, Mr. Bromley Davenport 720

NAVY CONTRACTS.—Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) 721

H.M.S. "CENTURION"—NAVY GUN SIGHTS.—Questions, Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth) and Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answers, Mr. Pretyman 721

INDIAN RAILWAY CONTRACTS FOR GERMANY.—Questions, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), Sir Charles M'Laren (Leicestershire, Bosworth), Sir Thomas Wrightson (St. Pancras, E.), and Mr. Maconochie (Aberdenshire, E.); Answers, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford).. 722

CONVICT LABOUR FOR JOHANNESBURG MINES.—Question, Mr. Whitley; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 723

AUSTRALIAN IMMIGRATION ACT.—Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 723

COAL EXPORTS.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 724

BOARD OF TRADE JOURNAL.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 724

VEHICULAR ACCIDENTS IN LONDON.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 724

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POTTERY TRADE RULES.—Question, Sir Charles M'Laren ; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 725

COLLECTIONS FOR THE RELIEF OF THE WORKING CLASSES.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas ; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 725

PAY OF RURAL POSTMEN IN DEVONSHIRE.—Question, Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) ; Answer, The Postmaster General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 726

POSTMEN'S COMPASSIONATE GRATUITIES.—Question, Mr. Soares ; Answer, Lord Stanley 726

UNDERGROUND TELEGRAPHIC CABLES.—Question, Sir John Leng ; Answer, Lord Stanley 727

CORK POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien (Cork) ; Answer, Lord Stanley 727

GLENCAR ROAD DISPUTE.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.) ; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 727

IRISH DRAINAGE LOANS.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.) ; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 728

IRISH DRAINAGE BOARDS.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell ; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 728

KING-HARMAN ESTATE.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell ; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 729

CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Questions, Major Seely (Isle of Wight), Sir Charles McLaren, Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs), and Mr. Herbert Samuel ; Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 729

ROYAL COMMISSION ON TRADE DISPUTES.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel ; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 733

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.—The honourable Alban George Henry Gibbs for City of London.

Joseph Dobbie, esquire, Ayr District of Burghs 733

NEW BILLS.

Small Dwellings (Acquisition) Bill.—"To amend the provisions of the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899," presented by Sir Thomas Wrightson ; supported by Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Graham, Mr. Peel, Sir Alfred Hickman, Captain Jessel, Mr. Moon, Mr. Pike Pease, Mr. Collings, and Mr. Griffith-Boscawen ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 19th February, and to be printed. [Bill 44.] 733

Highways Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Highways," presented by Mr. Henry Hobhouse ; supported by Sir John Dorington, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, Mr. Bill, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, and Mr. Herbert Lewis ; to be read a second time upon Monday, 29th February, and to be printed. [Bill 45.] 733

Roman Catholic Disabilities Removal Bill.—" To abolish Disabilities still affecting Roman Catholics in the United Kingdom," presented by Mr. M'Kean ; supported by Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. Dillon, Captain Donelan, Lord Edmund Talbot, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Joseph Devlin, Mr. James Hope, and Mr. Clancy ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd April, and to be printed. [Bill 46.] 733

Wages Boards Bill.—" To provide for the establishment of Wages Boards," presented by Sir Charles Dilke ; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Tennant, and Mr. Trevelyan ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 47.] 734

Wild Birds Protection Acts Amendment Bill.—" To amend the Wild Birds Protection Acts," presented by Mr. Sydney Buxton ; supported by Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Robert Reid, Colonel Lockwood, and Sir Edward Grey ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 48.] 734

Jury Acts (Ireland) Bill.—" To amend the Jury Acts in Ireland," presented by Mr. John Campbell ; supported by Mr. Clancy, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Patrick Aloysius McHugh, and Mr. O'Shaughnessy ; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 49.] 734

Contempt of Court (Ireland) Bill.—" To amend the Law of Contempt of Court in Ireland," presented by Mr. Sheehy ; supported by Mr. Clancy and Mr. Patrick Aloysius McHugh ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 29th April, and to be printed. [Bill 50.] 734

Irish Lights Board Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to the Irish Lights Board," presented by Captain Donelan ; supported by Mr. Clancy, Mr. Field, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Doogan, Mr. James O'Connor, and Mr. Nannetti ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 51.] .. 734

Conspiracy (Ireland) Bill.—" To amend the Law of Conspiracy in Ireland," presented by Mr. Doogan ; supported by Captain Donelan, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell, Mr. Condon, Mr. Patrick Aloysius McHugh, Mr. Kilbride, and Mr. J. P. Farrell ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 11th March, and to be printed. [Bill 52.] 734

Business of the House (King's Speech, Motion for an Address).—Ordered, " That the proceedings on the Address in Answer to His Majesty's Speech shall, until concluded, have precedence of all other Orders of the Day and of Notices of Motion at all Sittings for which they are set down."—(*Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) 735

King's Speech (Motion for an Address). [Sixth Day.].—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], " That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Pike Pease (*Darlington*) 735
Sir Robert Reid (*Dumfries Burghs*) 742
Mr. Hunt (*Shropshire, Ludlow*) 747
Sir Henry Fowler (*Wolverhampton, E.*) 752
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (*Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars*) 769
Lord George Hamilton (*Middlesex, Ealing*) 787
Sir James Kitson (*Yorkshire, W. R., Colne Valley*) 801

And it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

King's Speech (Motion for an Address).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words—But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, " That those words be there added."

Mr. Richard Cavendish (*Lancashire, North Lonsdale*) 808
Mr. Griffith Boscawen (*Kent, Tunbridge*) 810
Mr. John Ellis (*Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe.*) 818
Lord Hugh Cecil (*Greenwich*) 823
Sir Thomas Wrightson (*St. Pancras, E.*) 837

Motion made, and Question, " That the debate be now adjourned "—(*Sir Charles Dilke*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

NEW BILLS.

TRADE MARKS.—Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to Trade Marks, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Fletcher Moulton, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Cripps, Mr. Crawley, Mr. Butcher, Mr. Robson, and Sir Albert Rollit.

Trade Marks Bill.—" To consolidate and amend the Law relating to Trade Marks," presented, and read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 53.]

EASEMENT OF LIGHT.—Bill to amend the Law relating to Easement of Light, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Fletcher Moulton, Mr. H. D. Greene, Mr. Herbert Robertson, Mr. Robson, and Mr. Haldane.

Easement of Light Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to Easement of Light." presented and read, the first time ; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 54.] 840

Adjourned at ten minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, 10TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Kettering Improvement Bill (By order).—Read a second time, and committed 841

Torquay Tramway Bill.—" To authorise the construction of Tramways in Torquay ; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time ; to be read a second time 841

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.—The CHAIRMAN OF WAYS and MEANS reported, that, after conferring with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining in which House of Parliament the respective Bills should be first considered, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had determined that the Bills contained in the following list should originate in the House of Lords :—Clyde Valley Electrical Power ; Govan Burgh (Electricity) ; Lothians Electric Power ; Young and Bell's Patents. Report to lie upon the Table 841

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PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Brixton; Upper Norwood; West Dulwich; Prescelly; Cloughfold; Cheetham Hill; Winchester; Peniel; Halifax; Leicester; Tudhoe Colliery; Llansamlet; Clevedon; Hyfrydir; Preston; South Hackney; Cheltenham; Rhayader; Hedgerley; Darlington; Penisarwaen; Maesydref; Port Dinorwic; Bontnewyd; Maybole; Fenstanton; Seaton (two); Haslingden; Glasgow; Bristol; Emsworth; Green Moor; Kilmarnock; Port Glasgow; Newton Heath; Pontycymmer (two); Lindal; Buchlyvies; Bannockburn; Westhoughton; Salford (two); Paisley; Altrincham; Llansantffraid; Dewsbury; Llwynmaur; Glynceiriog; Wilsden; Cullompton; Hill of Beath; Aberystwyth; Rhydlewis; Low Leighton; Pencombe; Leominster; Hammersmith; Bampton; Buckland; Crieff (two); Comrie; Derby; and Lower Broughton; to lie upon the Table 841

RATING OF GROUND RENTS AND VALUES.—Petition from Bermondsey, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 842

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1903–4).—Estimate presented, of the further Sums required to be voted for the Service of the year ending 31st March, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 44.] 842

DUCHY OF CORNWALL.—Account presented, of the Receipts and Disbursements of the Duchy of Cornwall for the year ended 31st December, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 45] 842

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 4th February, 1904, declaring that Charles Dyer, Viewer, Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 842

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT, 1888.—Copy presented, of Order made by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, under the provisions of the said Act, for the variation of the Order creating the Southern Sea Fisheries District [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 842

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

CONTRACTS FOR SHIPMENT OF STORES TO GIBRALTAR.—Question, Mr. Partington (Derbyshire, High Peak); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 842

RE-ARMAMENT OF VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY.—Question, Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 843

REVISION OF BELFAST POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Lord Stanley 843

REMOVAL OF PAUPERS.—Question, Mr. Alexander Cross (Glasgow, Camlachie); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 843

CHARGES FOR EUROPEAN OFFICERS IN INDIAN CAVALRY REGIMENTS.—Question, Sir Seymour King (Hull, Central); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 845

PAYMENT OF COMMUTATION ALLOWANCES TO RETIRED MEMBERS OF INDIAN UNCOVENANTED SERVICES.—Question, Sir Seymour King; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 845

ARMY ESTIMATES—PUBLICATION OF APPENDICES.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; (Perthshire); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 845

EXPENDITURE UNDER SOUTH AFRICAN LOAN ACT.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 845

TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 846

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS ARMAMENT.—Question, Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 846

INDIAN ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 84 6

LABOUR STATISTICS FOR TRANSVAAL MINES.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 847

CHINESE LABOUR FOR THE TRANSVAAL—WAGES.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee) Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 847

TRANSVAAL IMPORTED LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland) and Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answers, Mr. Lyttelton 848

MACEDONIAN REFORMS.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) ..

LORD CURZON'S VISIT TO BUSHIRE.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, Earl Percy 851

CENTRAL AFRICAN LABOURERS IN TRANSVAAL MINES.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Earl Percy 851

GOVERNMENT OF THE SOUDAN.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Earl Percy .. 851

CANTON-KOWLOON RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Earl Percy .. 852

ELECTRICITY IN MINES.—Questions, Mr. Fenwick (Northumberland, Wansbeck) and Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 852

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL SITE.—Question, Mr. Cohen (Islington, E.); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 853

IRISH RAILWAY FREIGHTS.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick's); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 853

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RUSSIA-JAPANESE WAR—DUTIES OF NEUTRALS.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 854

Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill.—Order for Second Reading upon Friday, 25th March read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 854

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—[SEVENTH DAY.]—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February]. "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,—*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean.*) 855
Mr. Ritchie (*Croydon*) 866
Mr. Randles (*Cumberland, Cockermouth*) 881
Sir Edward Grey (*Northumberland, Berwick*) 883
(*The President of the Local Government Board* (*Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.*) 898
Mr. Winston Churchill (*Oldham*) 907
Mr. White Ridley (*Staleybridge*) 921

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,—*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question to add the words 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir William Holland (*Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham*) 926
Sir J. Dickson-Poynder (*Wiltshire, Chippenham*) 934
Sir George Bartley (*Islington, N.*) 939
Mr. Lloyd-George (*Carnarvon Burghs*) 946
Sir Gilbert Parker (*Gravesend*) 954

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS, THURSDAY, 11th FEBRUARY, 1904.

EARLDOM OF NORFOLK.—Petition of Charles Botolph Joseph Lord Mowbray Lord Segrave and Baron and Lord Stourton of Stourton in the county of Wiltshire, praying for leave to lodge a supplementary case; read, and ordered as prayed 961

LE POWER AND COROGHMORE BARONY.—Petition of Edmond de le Poer of Gurteen le Poer, in the county of Waterford, Esquire (claiming to be Baron of Le Power and Coroghmore in the Peerage of Ireland), to His Majesty, praying that His Majesty may be graciously pleased to give directions to the Attorney-General in Ireland to investigate the Petitioner's pedigree and his right to the succession to the dignity and honour of Baron of Le Power and Coroghmore in the Peerage of Ireland; and also as to the outlawry against John Power in or about the year 1691, in order that the same may be reversed if found to affect the Petitioner; and, if not, that then the Petitioner may be admitted to the full enjoyment of the ancient dignity and honour of his ancestors as Baron Le Power and Coroghmore, with all the rights, privileges, and immunities thereunto belonging, or to make such other order in the premises as in His Majesty's wisdom may be deemed expedient, together with His Majesty's reference thereof to this House, and the report of the Attorney-General thereon thereunto annexed.

Presented [by Command], read, and referred to the Committee for Privileges to consider and report 961

The Lord Romilly took the Oath 961

SAT FIRST.—The Lord Wynford sat first in Parliament after the death of his kinsman 961

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Elysee Palace Hotel Company Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; referred to the Examiners 962

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.—The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that Clerk of the Parliaments had prepared and laid it on the Table; The same was ordered to be printed. (No. 7) 962

AFRICA No. 1 (1904).—Correspondence and Report from His Majesty's Consul at Boma respecting the administration of the Independent State of the Congo 962

TRANSVAAL (LABOUR COMMISSION).

I. Reports of the Transvaal Labour Commission.

II. Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence 962

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.—Returns of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies in the United Kingdom during the nine months ended—30th September, 1903, in pursuance of the Regulation of Railways Act (1871); together with Reports of the inspecting officers, assistant inspecting officers, and sub-inspectors of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which were inquired into 962

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

I. Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of light railways in the borough of Maidstone, in the county of Kent; the parishes of Acton, Edgware, Edmonton, Enfield, Finchley, Friern Barnet, Hendon, Hornsey, Little Stanmore, Southgate, Tottenham, Wembley, Willesden, and Wood Green, in the county of Middlesex; the parish of Watford Urban and the urban district of Watford, in the county of Hertford; the urban districts of Quarry Bank, Brierley Hill, and Rowley Regis, in the county of Stafford.

II. An Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Robertsbridge and Pevensey Light Railway Order, 1900.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 962

COMMITTALS (IRELAND).—Returns from the Clerks of the Crown and Peace of the number of persons committed for trial in 1903 963

SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS (ENGLAND).—Rule dated 30th December, 1903, made by the Lord Chancellor under Section 29 of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, as to the taking of recognisances by the governor of a prison .. 963

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT, 1888.—Order, made by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries under the provisions of the Act, for the variation of the Order creating the Southern Sea Fisheries District 963

SUPERANNUATION.—Treasury Minute, dated 4th February, 1904, declaring that Charles Dyer, Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his Department 963

DUCHY OF CORNWALL.—An account of the receipts and disbursements of the Duchy of Cornwall in the year ended the 31st December, 1903 963

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853 TO 1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).—Licence granted by His Majesty to Florence Elizabeth Maybrick, under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which is annexed a condition other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 .. 963

POOR PRISONERS' DEFENCE ACT, 1903 (DRAFT RULES).—Draft rules proposed to be made by the Attorney-General with the approval of the Lord Chancellor and the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 2 of the Act 963

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP).—General rules made pursuant to the Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890, and the Judicature Act, 1881 964

PILOTAGE.—Abstract of returns relating to pilots and pilotage in the United Kingdom (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 312, of session of 1902), as furnished by the various pilotage authorities 964

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES.—Statements of accounts and of life assurance and annuity business and abstract of actuarial reports deposited with the Board of Trade, under Section 10 of the Life Assurance Companies Act, 1870. during the year ended 31st December, 1903.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table .. 964

BANK OF ENGLAND.—Applications made by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England for advances to Government authorised by Parliament, from 5th January, 1903, to 5th January, 1904; delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 964

BIRMINGHAM BISHOPRIC.—Petition in favour of legislation for the creation of a new See of Birmingham; of the President and Members of the Worcester Diocesan Conference; read and ordered to lie on the Table 964

NEW BILL.

Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to enable women to be elected and act as members of county and borough councils and metropolitan borough councils was presented by the Earl of Beauchamp: read 1a; and to be printed. (No. 8.) 964

CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.

The Earl of Portsmouth 965
The Marquess of Ripon 972

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty for Papers relating to the affairs of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, with special reference to the question of the employment of Chinese labour in the Transvaal.—(*The Marquess of Ripon.*)

The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Duke of Marlborough) .. 986
The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 1001

Moved, " That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Earl Grey*)
On Question, Motion agreed to.

LOADING PORT CLAUSE.

Lord Muskerry 1005
Lord Wolverton 1007

House adjourned at twenty-five mintues past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.—

Colney Hatch Gas Bill.
London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill.
Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Bill

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1007

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been coplied with, viz.—

Chippenham Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1008

East London and Lower Thames Electric Power Bill.
North and South Woolwich Electric Railway Bill.

Read a second time and committed 1008

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill.—Considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next 1008

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of law; from Bulwell; Frome; Bradford (two); Swansea (three); Earlestown; Padgate; Golborne; Haydock; Wigan; Isle of Wight; Newport; Ashton in Makerfield (two); Dawlish; Exeter; Leicester; Wigston; Chester; Manchester (six); Osmotherley; Morehampstead; Stockport; Cynfal; Oakengates; Llandudno; Maenan; Llanddeiniolen; Heckmondwike; Clayton West; Llangyndeyme; Bryn; Southport (seven); Skelmanthorpe; Lowton and Newton;

Fowlmere ; Nottingham (three) ; Ilfracombe ; Fishtoft ; Anglesey ; Llandensant ; Llanfairneubwll Valley ; Gaerwen ; Cemaes Bay ; Dwyran ; Brixton ; Llangwyllog ; Holyhead ; Beaumauris ; Cardiff (five) ; Ilkley ; Rusholme ; Earlestown ; Warrington ; St. Just in Penwith ; Glossop ; Salford ; South Ferriby ; Ashby (two) ; Donington Barracks ; West Felton ; Fairfield ; Ilkeston ; Colne ; Dewsbury ; Durham ; Jarrow ; Birks Morley ; Boldon Colliery ; Rogerstone ; Liverpool ; Keswick ; and Helson (three) ; to lie upon the Table 1008

Sea Fisheries Regulations Act, 1888.—Paper [presented 10th February] to be printed. [No. 46] 1009

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Poor Prisoners' Defence Act, 1903.—Copy presented, of Draft of Rules proposed to be made by the Attorney-General, with the approval of the Lord Chancellor and the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 2 of The Poor Prisoners' Defence Act, 1903 [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table 1009

Penal Servitude Acts (Conditional Licence).—Copy presented, of a Licence to be at large, granted to Florence Elizabeth Maybrick, to which is annexed a condition other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table 1009

Transvaal.—Copy presented, of Reports of the Transvaal Labour Commission [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table 1009

Transvaal.—Copy presented, of Reports of the Transvaal Labour Commission, Minutes of Proceedings, and Evidence [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table. 1009

Africa (No. 1, 1904).—Copy presented, of Correspondence and Report from His Majesty's Consul at Boma respecting the Administration of the Independent State of the Congo [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table 1009

Army (Supplementary Estimate, 1903-4).—Estimate presented, of the Further Amount that will be required during the year ending 31st March, 1904, to meet the Expenditure in excess of that provided for in the original Army Estimates for the year, for the Pay, Transport, Supplies, etc., of the Army [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 47] 1009

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Portuguese Tariff Bill and Lancashire Cotton Trade.—Question, Mr. White Ridley (Stalybridge) ; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1010

Conference in Egypt on Cotton and Bourse Gambling.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick's) ; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1010

Future and Option Gambling in Canada.—Question, Mr. Field ; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1011

Import Duty collected on Wheat, etc., from British India.—Question, Captain Sinclair (Forfarshire) ; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1011

Learners in Cork Post Office.—Question, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien (Cork) ; Answer, Lord Stanley 1012

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CONTRACTS FOR COAL SUPPLY TO ENNISCORTHY POST OFFICE.—Question, Sir Thomas Esmonde (Wexford), N.; Answer, Lord Stanley 1012

CARRIAGE OF MAILS BETWEEN LIMERICK AND TRALEE.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1012

BETTING LEGISLATION.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1012

RECORD OF CANCER CASES IN INDIA.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1013

PRACTICAL COOKERY INSTRUCTION IN IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Kennedy (Westmeath, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1014

AUDIT OF BELFAST COUNTY BOROUGH ACCOUNTS.—Question, Mr. Sloan, Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1014

DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE—RETENTION ON ACTIVE LIST OF SUPERINTENDENTS NARRISEY AND DEMPSEY.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1015

ERECTION OF TECHNICAL SCHOOLS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1015

RESOLUTIONS OF ASYLUM COMMITTEES.—Question, Mr. Field; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1015

MARINE WORKS IN CONNEMARA.—Question, Mr. O'Malley (Galway, Connemara); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1016

CONSTRUCTION OF MILITARY MAPS.—Question, Lieut.-Colonel Tufnell (Essex, S.E.); Answer, Mr. Arnold Forster 1016

CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAY EMBANKMENT BETWEEN CHIROMO AND BLANTYRE.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Earl Percy 1017

CHINESE GOVERNMENT AND THE TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Earl Percy 1017

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

WAR OFFICE INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT.—Question, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1018

SOUTH AFRICAN RESERVISTS—RIFLE SIGHTS.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1018

MILITARY ARMAMENTS, STORES, ETC.—PRECAUTIONS AGAINST DEFICIENCES.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1019

GALWAY HARBOUR—NAVAL VISITS.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) 1019

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PROPOSED COALING STATIONS IN SOUTH WALES.—Question, Mr. Osmond Williams (Merionethshire); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1020

BRITISH INDIANS AND TRANSVAAL DRAFT ORDINANCE.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 1020

TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE—TRANSFER OF IMPORTERS' RIGHTS.—Questions, Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee), Dr. Macnamara, and Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington) 1021

CHINESE LABOUR—REGULATIONS FOR RECRUITING.—Questions, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe), Mr. J. A. Pease (Essex, Saffron Walden), Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar), and Dr. Macnamara; Answers, Mr. Lyttleton 1022

CHINESE GOVERNMENT AND THE TRANSVAAL LABOUR ORDINANCE.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.) 1022

TRANSVAAL MINES—CONVICT LABOUR.—Question, Mr. Whitley (Halifax); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1024

LABOUR LAWS IN AUSTRALIA.—Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1025

LAND SETTLEMENT IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. John Ellis; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1026

TRINIDAD DISTURBANCES.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1026

MALTESE COUNCIL ELECTION.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1026

RAILWAY EMBANKMENT BETWEEN CHIROMO AND BLANTYRE.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Earl Percy 1027

SHIPPING PROFITS.—Question, Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) .. 1027

MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT—FRAUDULENT WHISKEY.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1028

PREFERENTIAL RATES FOR FOREIGN PRODUCE.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1028

CANADIAN MAIL ROUTES.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.) .. 1029

AVOCH HARBOUR.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 1029

SCOTTISH CROFTERS ACT, 1886—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 1030

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BEE KEEPING IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.) 1030

CORK WINTER ASSIZES—ALLEGED JURY PACKING.—Questions, Mr. Flynn; Answers, Mr. Atkinson 1031

SMERWICK FISHING INDUSTRY.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1032

IRISH MAGISTRATES AND THE IRISH LANGUAGE.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell; Answer. Mr. Atkinson 1032

IRISH ROAD CONSTRUCTION SURCHARGES.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1033

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BELFAST.—Question, Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1033

MILITARY DISTURBANCES AT LIMERICK.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1034

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—SERGEANT WILLIAMSON'S TRIAL.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1035

VALENTIA FERRY.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1035

CAHIRCIVEEN PARISH COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1035

IRISH DISTRICT LUNATIC ASYLUMS.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1035

LAND COMMISSION IN LONGFORD.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1036

CARE OF THE INSANE—SCOTTISH SYSTEM.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1036

COLLUM'S ESTATE, COUNTY FERMANAGH.—Question, Mr. Edward Mitchell (Fermanagh, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1037

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork County, Mid); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1037

IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUDITORS—QUALIFICATIONS.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1038

STRABANE GAS WORKS LOAN.—Question, Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, N.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1039

LONGFORD POSTAL ARRANGEMENT.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1039

SELECTION (UNOPPOSED BILL COMMITTEES) (PANEL).—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection that they had selected the following eight Members to be the Panel to serve on Unopposed Bill Committees under Standing Order No. 109:—Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Carvill, Mr. H. D. Greene, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Mr. Mellor, Mr. Paulton, Mr. Parker Smith, and Mr. Worsley-Taylor. 1039

Report to lie upon the Table.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).—MR. HALSEY reported from the Committee that they had selected the following six Members to be the Chairmen's Panel and to serve as Chairmen of the two Standing Committees to be appointed under Standing Order No. 49 :—Mr. John Ellis, Sir Thomas Esmunde, Sir James Fergusson, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, Mr. Laurence Hardy, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley 1039

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILL.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS (FUNDS)BILL.—" To authorise the appropriation of the surplus Funds derived from Battersea Park towards the opening of the Mall into Charing Cross, and other Metropolitan improvements," presented by Mr. Victor Cavendish ; supported by Lord Balcarres ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 55.] 1039

KING'S SPEECH, (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS) [EIGHTH DAY.]—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question, [2nd February], " That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign,—*

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

" At the end of the Question, to add the words ' But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm, and to the welfare of its population ; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being.' "—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, " That those words be there added."

Sir Gilbert Parker (*Gravesend*) 1041
Sir John Gorst (*Cambridge University*) 1046
Mr. Chaplin (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) 1054
Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeen, S.*) 1068
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington*) 1083
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 1094

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kindgom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question to add the words 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well being."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. J. F. Hope (*Sheffield, Brightside*) 1105
Sir John Brunner (*Cheshire, Northwich*) 1113
Major Seely (*Isle of Wight*) 1118
Mr. Parker Smith (*Lanarkshire, Partick*) 1122
Mr. Bell (*Derby*) 1133

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed this day.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 12TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—
Ilford Urban District Council 1137

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Lancashire Electric Power [H.L.]; West Riding Tramways [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways [H.L.]; Tynemouth Gas [H.L.]; Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads [H.L.]; Yorktown and Blackwaters Gas [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) [H.L.]; Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas [H.L.]; Victoria University of Manchester [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Extension of Time, etc.) [H.L.]. The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1137

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Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [H.L.]; Barrow-in-Furness Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]; Bridlington Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Buxton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Chesterfield Corporation Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Chesterfield Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Derwent Valley Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Ebbw Vale Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Filey Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Harrogate Waterworks Tramroad Bill [H.L.]; Holywood Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment), Bill [H.L.]; Ipswich Dock Commission Bill [H.L.]; Leeds Corporation (Waterworks) Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Milwr and District Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Minehead Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Oakengates, Dawley, and District Joint Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Preston Corporation Water Bill [H.L.]; Shipley Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Ulster Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Weaver Navigation (Additional Finance) Bill [H.L.] Read 2a 1137

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TREATY SERIES, NO. 2 (1904).—Convention respecting payment of light and harbour dues by vessels of the United States in Zanzibar; signed at Washington, 5th June, 1903. (Ratifications exchanged at Washington, 24th December, 1903.) Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 1138

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).—Statement of the amount due by the public to depositors in Military Savings Banks on the 31st March, 1901, and of the receipts, interest, and disbursements in the said Military Savings Banks during the year next ensuing, ended on the 31st March, 1902, etc. 1138

SUPERANNUATION.—Treasury Minute, dated 4th February, 1904, granting a retired allowance to Edward Joseph Carey, late a messenger in the office of the Chief Secretary, Dublin Castle 1138

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILLS.

Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill.—[H.L.] (No. 9).—A Bill to amend the law relating to the arrangement of polling districts in Parliamentary Boroughs; and 1338

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill [H.L.] (No. 10).—A Bill to make further provision with respect to the arrangement of polling districts for the election of County Councillors.

Were presented by the Lord Ribblesdale; read 1a, and to be printed .. 1338

Newcastle Chapter (Amendments) Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to make further provisions for the foundation of a Dean and Chapter of Newcastle, and for other purposes connected therewith. Was presented by the Lord Bishop of St. Albans; read 1a, and to be printed. (No. 11).

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WEI-HAI-WEI.

Earl Spencer 1138
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (the Marquess of Lansdowne) 1138

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The Marquess of Lansdowne 1140

Moved, That the Lord Balfour be appointed to take the Chair in the Committee of the Whole House, and in all Committees upon Private Bills in the absence of the Chairman of Committees from illness.—(*The Marquess of Lansdowne.*)

Earl Spencer 1140
The Earl of Cork 1140
The Duke of Abercorn 1140

On Question, Motion agreed to.

CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Order of the Day read for the Adjourned Debate on the Motion of the Marquess of Ripon, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty's Government for Papers relating to the affairs of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, with special reference to the question of the employment of Chinese labour in the Transvaal."

Earl Grey 1141
Earl Carrington 1153
The President of the Board of Agriculture (The Earl of Onslow) 1163
The Lord Bishop of Rochester 1173
Lord Stanmore 1176
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Lansdowne) 1185
The Marquess of Ripon 1188

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.
House adjourned at a quarter to Eight o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 12TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Lincolnshire and Yorkshire Electric Power Bill; Plymouth Corporation Bill. Read a second time and committed 1190

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with :—viz., Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill
Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1190

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.:—Thames Steamboat Trust Bill; Wellington (Somerset) Gas Bill.
Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1190

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the list reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, he has certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following case, viz.:—Ilford Urban District Council 1190

PETITIONS.

LICENSES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Brierley Hill; Cradley Heath; Dudley; Worcester; Quarry Bank; Plymouth; Bedminster; Maesteg; Leigh; Wimborne (two); Seven Dials; Tryddyn (five); Leeswood (three); Clwyd; Newmarket; Rhuallt; Cilcain; Sychtyn; Nether Kellet; Hebburn; Earlestown; Perth Wilson; Milnrow; Penzance; Coventry; Littleborough (two); Bryn; Flint; Rhyl; Higher Broughton; 'Clynnog; Portdinorwic; Glasgow (two); Walsden; Saffron Walden; Lockerbie; Crowton; Chester; Pentre; Gwespyr; Llanegyr; Bedlington; Stirling; Glen Albyn; Royton (two); Tyldesley; Borthygest; Brynmenai; Corwen; Petersfield; Stockport; Brighouse; Elland; Broughton; Greenock; Aberporth; Halifax; Totnes; Yelverton; Shepton Mallet; Cornwood; Elvet; Abergwili; and Bristol; to lie upon the Table. 1191

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 4th February, 1904, granting a retired allowance to Edward Joseph Carey, late a messenger in the office of the Chief Secretary, Dublin Castle, under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1191

THIBET (TRADE STATISTICS).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address, 9th February; *Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree*]; to lie upon the Table [No. 48.] 1191

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.—Copy ordered, "of Account showing the gross amount received and the gross amount expended in respect of the Telegraph Service, from the date of the transfer of the Telegraphs to the State to the 31st day of March, 1902 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 31, of session 1903)."—(*Lord Stanley.*)
Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 49.] 1192

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

CRIME IN LIVERPOOL.—Question, Mr. Corbett (Glasgow, Tradeston); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1192

DRUNKENNESS IN ENGLAND AND WALES.—Question, Mr. Corbett; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1193

LAND PURCHASE ACTS—REJECTED APPLICATION FOR ADVANCES.—Question, Mr. P. A. McHugh (Leitrim, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1193

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NATURALISATION OF FOREIGN SEAMEN.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1194

ORDERS FOR ARMOUR PLATE.—Question, Mr. J. F. Hope (Sheffield, Brightside); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1194

TWINNING SYSTEM FOR TURRET GUNS.—Question, Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1195

BELFAST POST OFFICE—PROMOTION OF MR. KING.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1195

SANITARY CONDITION OF CENTRAL TELEGRAPH OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Lord Stanley 1196

BRITISH CONSULATE AT JERUSALEM—DELIVERY OF MAILS TO BRITISH RESIDENTS. —Mr. Yoxall; Answer, Earl Percy 1196

SAVING ON VOTE FOR IRISH DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1196

OPERATIONS OF IRISH LAND ACT.—Question, Mr. P. A. McHugh; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1197

POISONING OF DOGS AT HOWTH.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1197

CASES BEFORE RATHDRUM LAND COMMISSIONERS.—Question, Mr. Cogan (Wicklow, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1198

OUTPUT OF GOLD IN TRANSVAAL DURING JANUARY.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1198

ASIATIC LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1198

ADJOURNMENT.—Resolved, That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Monday next.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*) 1199

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS) [NINTH DAY].—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective

duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm, and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being.'" (*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Bell (*Derby*) 1200
Sir Edgar Vincent (*Exeter*) 1208
Mr. Duke (*Plymouth*) 1217
Mr. Crombie (*Kincardineshire*) 1224
Mr. Lambton (*Durham, S.E.*) 1227
Mr. Renwick (*Newcastle-on-Tyne*) 1232
Mr. Henderson (*Durham, Barnard Castle*) 1237
Mr. Beckett (*Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby*) 1241
Mr. Evelyn Cecil (*Aston Manor*) 1247
Sir Edward Strachey (*Somersetshire, S.*) 1251

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned"—(*Sir Howard Vincent*), put and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

NEW BILL.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACTS (EXTENSION).—Bill to extend the Public Libraries Acts to counties, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Kenyon, Mr. Bryce, Sir James Rankin, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Lloyd-George, and Mr. Sumuel Evans.

Public Libraries Acts (Extension) Bill.—"To extend the Public Libraries Acts to counties," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 23rd February, and to be printed [Bill 56.] .. 1256

Adjourned at half after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 15TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Clyde Valley Electric Power, Lothians Electric Power, Young and Bell's Patents.

And also the certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas [H.L.]; Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway [H.L.]; Great Western Railway [H.L.]; Isle of Thanet Light Railways [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1257

Marylebone Chapels (Saint James, Westmoreland Street). Petition of the right hon. Robert George Windsor Clive Baron Windsor, and of the Reverend William Barker, Rector of the Parish of St. Marylebone, Trustees of the Chapel of Saint James, Westmoreland Street, praying for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the sale of the Chapel of Saint James, Westmoreland Street, and for other purposes connected therewith ; together with copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto ; read, and referred to the Exa aminers 1257

Ilford Urban District Council Bill [H.L.] ; Lothians Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. Presented, and read 1a. 1257

Young and Bell's Patents Bill [H.L.]. Presented ; read 1a ; and referred to the Examiners 1257

Preston and Blackburn Tramways Bill [H.L.] ; Weaver Navigation (Constitution and Finance) Bill [H.L.] ; Withnell Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 2a 1257

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—No. 3121. Egypt (Trade, 1887–1902) 1257

CHINA, No. 2 (1904).—Correspondence respecting the Russian occupation of Manchurian and Newchwang 1258

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).—Return for the month of November, 1903 1258

TRANSVAAL.—Further correspondence regarding the Transvaal labour question (in continuation of [Cd. 1898], February, 1904). Presented (by Command) and ordered to lie on the Table 1258

GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS FOUNDATION (CAPITAL AND INCOME ACCOUNTS, 1902–1903).—Accounts of the receipt and expenditure of the capital and of the income derived from the lands and other property held for the benefit of Greenwich Hospital and the foundation of Samuel Travers, Esquire, for the year ended 31st March, 1903, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon 1258

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES, WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION SCHEMES, INDUSTRIAL AND PROVIDENT SOCIETIES, AND TRADES UNIONS.—Reports of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, for the year ended 31st December, 1903 1258

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) (NON-CONGESTED DISTRICTS).—Account for the year ended 31st December, 1903 1258

GREEK LOAN OF 1832—Annual Accunt for 1903 1258

SUPERANNUATION (PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS).—Treasury Minute, dated 30th January, 1904, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Inspector-General in Bankruptcy, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired on the Public Service are required. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1258

ADDRESS.

The King's Answer to the Address of Tuesday the 2nd instant reported ; and the Address and Answer to be printed and published 1259

WEI-HAI-WEI—AN UNFOUNDED RUMOUR.

Earl Spencer 1259
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 1259

AFFAIRS OF SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE—CONDITION OF MACEDONIA.

Lord Newton 1259

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for further Papers respecting the affairs of South-Eastern Europe."—

(*Lord Newton.*)
The Earl of Lytton 1268
The Earl of Aberdeen 1276
The Lord Bishop of Rochester 1279
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 1282
Earl Spencer 1289

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

THE CASE OF MR. MCCULLY.

Lord Muskerry 1294
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1298

House adjourned, as Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 15TH FEBRUARY 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—London, Camberwell, and Dulwich Tramways Bill; North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill; Southend-on-Sea Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1299

SUBSTITUTED BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in respect of the following Bills introduced pursuant to the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and which the Chairman of Ways and Means had directed to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with, viz.:—Clyde Valley Electrical Power [Lords]; Lothians Electric Power [Lords]; Young and Bell's Patents [Lords]. 1299

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Bishop's Stortford and District Gas Bill; Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill; Corbridge Gas Bill; Gomersal Gas Bill; Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill; Norwich Water Bill; Southend Water Bill; South Shields Gas Bill; South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Sutton Gas Bill; Whitby Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed 1299

CHESHIRE ELECTRICITY AND POWER GAS. Ordered, That Standing Orders 204 and 205 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read a second time.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Bill accordingly read a second time, and committed 1300

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1300

Plymouth and North Devon Direct Railway (Abandonment) Bill.—Order [4th February], that the Plymouth and North Devon Direct Railway (Abandonment) Bill be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*Mr. Caldwell*) 1300

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION ACT, 1902.—Petition from Fife and Angus, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 1300

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—Petition of the Male Electors' League for Women's Suffrage, in favour; to lie upon the Table .. 1300

LAL, JEWEN.—Petition of Jewen Lal, for inquiry into his case; to lie upon the Table 1300

LICENCES (RENEWAL).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Musselburgh; Dartmouth; Sheffield; Penmaenmawr; Cilfynydd; Titchfield; Fareham; Batley; Margate; Throckley; Glasgow; South Manchester; New Quay (three); Welch Row; North Camberwell; North West Gloucestershire; Fishguard; Forfar; Dumfries and Kirkcudbright; Coupar Angus; Burton; Northampton; and East Greenwich; to lie upon the Table 1300

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COMMONS (INCLOSURE AWARDS).—Return [presented 9th February] to be printed. [No. 50.] 1301

IRISH LAND COMMISSION [PROCEEDINGS].—Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of November, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1301

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) (NON-CONGESTED DISTRICTS).—Account presented, for the year ended 31st December, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1301

TRANSVAAL.—Copy presented, of further correspondence regarding the Transvaal Labour Question [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1301

GREEK LOAN.—Account presented, up to 31st December, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 51.] 1301

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NAVY (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT).—Copy presented, of the Appropriation Account of the Navy for 1902–3, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon, and upon the Store Accounts of the Navy [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 52.] 1301

ARMY (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT).—Copy presented, of the Appropriation Account for 1902–3, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon, and upon the Store Accounts of the Army [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 53] 1301

SUPERANNUATION.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 30th January, 1904, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Inspector-General in Bankruptcy, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are required [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1301

GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS' FOUNDATION.—Accounts presented, for the year ended 31st March, 1903, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 54] 1301

CHINA (No. 2, 1904).—Copy presented, of Correspondence respecting the Russian occupation of Manchuria and Newchwang [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1302

TREATY SERIES (No. 2, 1904).—Copy presented, of Convention respecting Payment of Light and Harbour Dues by Vessels of the United States in Zanzibar. Signed at Washington, 5th June, 1903. Ratifications exchanged at Washington, 24th December, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 1302

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3121 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1302

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Friendly Societies, Workmen's Compensation Schemes, Industrial and Provident Societies, and Trades Unions. Reports of the Chief Registrar for the year ending 31st December, 1903 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 55] 1302

AMERICAN MAIL SERVICE.—Return ordered, "Showing the number of days, hours, and minutes occupied in the transit of the Royal Mails, both outward and inward, carried during the year 1903 by steamships between Queenstown and New York, between Southampton and New York, and also between New York and Plymouth. The Return to specify the names of the steamers, and to indicate by asterisk or otherwise those not carrying Mails under contract."—(*Sir John Leng.*) 1302

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (HALF-YEARLY STATEMENTS).—Copy ordered, "Of Statement of the number of Paupers relieved on the 1st day of January, 1904, and similar statements for the 1st day of July, 1904 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 109, of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. Grant Lawson*) 1302

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

SIGHTS OF GUNS ON H.M.S. "VENERABLE" AND "RAMILLES."—Question, Mr. Harmsworth (Caithness-shire); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1303

ADMIRALTY SHIPBUILDING PROGRAMME.—Question, Mr. Yerburgh (Chester); Answer, Mr. Pretyman 1303

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PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES INTO DEPRESSION OF AGRICULTURE.—Question, Mr. Frederick Wilson (Norfolk, Mid); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour .. 1304

CHIEF CLERKS TO SURVEYORS OF TAXES.—Question, Mr. Heywood Johnstone (Sussex, Horsham); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1304

ALLEGED EXEMPTION OF IRISH ROMAN CATHOLIC CLERGY FROM INCOME TAX.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain .. 1304

ANNUAL SAVING IN IRISH ADMINISTRATION.—Question, Mr. Ffrench (Wexford, S.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1304

INSPECTION OF BOARDED-OUT CHILDREN PAUPER IN SCOTLAND.—Question, Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire); Answer, Mr. Graham Murray 1305

PLANS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—Question, Mr. Heywood Johnstone; Answer, Lord Balcarres 1305

SANITARY INSPECTORS' CERTIFICATES.—Question, Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1306

OFFICERS IN INDIAN NATIVE REGIMENTS—RANK OTHER THAN MILITARY.—Question, Colonel Denny (Kilmarnock Burghs); Answer, Mr. Brodrick .. 1306

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1306

CERTIFICATES FOR TRAINED NURSES IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1307

BUILDING OF TECHNICAL SCHOOLS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Ffrench; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1307

COLLECTIONS OF COUNTY RATES IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Ffrench; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1308

IRISH LAND ACT.—Question, Mr. Ffrench; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1308

BELFAST RE-VALUATION.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1309

INDIAN OFFICERS.—Questions, Colonel Denny; Answers Mr. Brodrick 1309

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RUSSIA AND MANCHURIA.—Question, Mr. Joseph Walton; Answer, Earl Percy 1323

CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel; Answer, Earl Percy 1323

TRANSVAAL MINES, RECRUITS FROM BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Earl Percy 1324

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IRISH DEVELOPMENT GRANT FUND.—Questions, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.) and Mr. John Redmond; Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1334

LIMERICK GAOL DOCTOR.—Questions, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1335

COMPANY LEGISLATION.—Question, Mr. Swift MacNeill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 1335

WHITAKER WRIGHT TRIAL COSTS.—Questions, Mr. Swift MacNeill and Mr. T. W. Russell; Answers, Mr. Akers Douglas 1335

RUSSIA AND THE DARDANELLES.—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1336

CHINESE LABOUR FOR THE TRANSVAAL.—Questions, Sir Charles McLaren, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. William Redmond; Answers, Mr. Akers Douglas 1336

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NEW WRITS.—New Writ for the County of York (Southern part of the West Riding, Normanton Division), in the room of Benjamin Pickard, esquire, deceased.—(*Mr. Herbert Gladstone*) 1339

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—John Bamford Slack, esquire, for the County of Herts Mid or St. Alban's Division) 1339

NEW BILLS.

Coal Mines (Employment) Bill.—"To amend the provisions of the Coal Mines Regulation Acts which relate to employment," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Keir Hardie, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Holland, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Bell, Mr. Cremer, and Mr. Joseph Walton; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 57] 1339

Lands Valuation (Scotland) Bill.—"To amend the Lands Valuation (Scotland) Act, 1854," presented by Mr. McCrae; supported by Mr. Bryce, Sir John Leng, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. John Dewar, and Mr. Robert Wallace; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 26th April; and to be printed. [Bill 58] 1339

Nurses Bill.—"To regulate the qualification of trained Nurses, and to provide for their registration," presented by Mr. Farquharson; supported by Mr. Haldane, Sir Thomas Wrightson, Sir James Joicey, Sir John Tuke, Mr. H. C. Smith, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Black, Mr. Colston, Mr. Eve, and Dr. Thompson; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 59] 1339

Public Libraries Bill.—" To amend the Acts relating to Public Libraries by removing the existing limit to the amount of the library rate," presented by Mr. Tennant; supported by Sir Albert Rollit, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Alfred Thomas, Mr. Thornton, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Middlemore, Mr. Hunter Craig, and Mr. Haldane; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 25th February, and to be printed. [Bill 60] 1440

Factory and Workshop Act (1901) Amendment Bill.—" To amend the Law relating to the provisions for escape from fire in Factories and Workshops," presented by Mr. Tennant; supported by Captain Norton, Mr. Hugh Law, Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Mr. John Burns, Sir John Dickson-Poynder, and Mr. Peel; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 25th February, and to be printed. [Bill 61] 1440

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (KING'S SPEECH, MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Ordered, That the Proceedings on the King's Speech (Motion for an Address), if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House).—(*Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas*).

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—(TENTH DAY,—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], " That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign* —

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

" At the end of the Question, to add the words, ' But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of the House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being ' "—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, " That those words be there added."

Sir Howard Vincent (*Sheffield, Central*) 1341
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1353
Mr. Elliot (*Durham*) 1363
Sir A. Seale Haslam (*Newcastle-under-Lyne*) 1370
Mr. Asquith (*Fifeshire, E.*) 1374
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Wyndham, Dover*) 1390
Mr. Rea (*Gloucester*) 1404

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But it is our duty however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of the protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being.'"—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. Rea 1408
Mr. Guest (Plymouth) 1410
Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool, Exchange) 1414
Mr. Theodore Taylor (Lancashire, Radcliffe) 1417
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 1421
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1426
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 1438

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 276; Noes, 327. (Division List, No. 2.)

Main Question again proposed.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel*) put and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

PUBLIC PETITIONS.—Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed, to whom shall be referred all Petitions presented to the House, with the exception of such as relate to Private Bills; and that such Committee do classify and prepare abstracts of the same, in such form and manner as shall appear to them best suited to convey to the House all requisite information respecting their contents, and do report the same from time to time to the House; and that the reports of the Committee do set forth the number of signatures

to each Petition only in respect to those signatures to which addresses are affixed :—And that such Committee have power to direct the printing *in extenso* of such petitions, or of such parts of Petitions, as shall appear to requireit. And that such Committee have power to report their opinion and observations thereupon to the House.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of Mr. Alsopp, Mr. Edward Barry, Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree, Mr. Brymer, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Sir Henry Meysey-Thompson, Mr. Charles Morley, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Philipps, Mr. Tollemache, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, and Mr. Henry Joseph Wilson. 1451

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)
Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Barnard Castle Gas [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway [H.L.]

Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :—Bristol Tramways (Extension).

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—Govan Burgh (Electricity). The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1453

Clyde Valley Electrical Power Bill [H.L.] Presented; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners 1453

Lancashire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; West Riding Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Extension of Time, &c.) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª. 1453

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill.—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed, and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been read 2ª [The Lord Kintore (*E. Kintore*)], and reported from the Committee. (No. 12.) .. 1453

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Colonies (Miscellaneous).—No. 26 Northern Nigeria. Report on a series of mineral and vegetable products from Northern Nigeria, by Professor W. R. Dunstan, Director of the Imperial Institute 1453

Africa, No. 3 (1904).—Correspondence respecting the introduction of Chinese labour into the Transvaal 1454

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TREATY SERIES, No. 3 (1904).—Agreement between the United Kingdom and Italy providing for the settlement by arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the two Governments; signed at Rome, 1st February, 1904.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1454

CHELSEA HOSPITAL (ARMY PRIZE MONEY AND LEGACY FUNDS, 1902–1903.).—Account of the receipts and expenditure of the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital (for services other than those voted by Parliament), in the year ended 31st March, 1903; together with the report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon 1454

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS.—Twelfth Annual Report of the proceedings of the Inspection Committee of Trustee Savings Banks, for the year ended 20th November, 1903; with appendix.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 145

SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM.—Statement of the funds, 5th January, 1904. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1454

Sea Fisheries Bill [H.L.]. [SECOND READING.]

The President of the Board of Agriculture (*The Earl of Onslow*) 1454
Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)
Lord Heneage 1461

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and referred to a Select Committee.

RAILWAY RATES ON MILK AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE.

The Earl of Lichfield 1462
Lord Monteagle of Brandon 1466
The Earl of Onslow 1467

THE CASE OF CAPTAIN HARRISON.

Lord Muskerry 1469
Lord Wolverton 1469

THE STRANDING OF THE "ISLE OF LEWIS" "DRUMBAIN"

Lord Muskerry 1469
Lord Wolverton 1470
House adjourned at twenty minutes past Five o'clock to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH). Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Crystal Palace District Gas Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1470

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PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz. :—Brixham Gas Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1471

SUBSTITUTED BILL [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in respect of the following Bill introduced pursuant to the provisions of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and which the Chairman of Ways and Means had directed to originate in the House of Lords, he has certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with, viz.,—Govan Burgh (Electricity) (Substituted) Bill [Lords] 1471

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—London United Tramways; London United Tramways (Railways); Middlesborough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thornaby Tramways.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1471

PRIVATE BILL [LORDS].—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, he has certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in the following case, viz. :—Bristol Tramways Extensions) 1471

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—Bristol Tramways (Extensions).

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1472

Chippenham Gas Bill; Colney Hatch Gas Bill; London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill. Read a second time, and committed 1472

Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Bill.– To be read a second time to-morrow 1472

Donegal Railway Bill (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed .. 1472

METROPOLITAN COMMON SCHEME (HILLINGDON EAST) PROVISIONAL ORDER.—Bill to confirm a Scheme with respect to Norman's or No Man's Land, Hillingdon, East, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes and Mr. Victor Cavendish 1472

METROPOLITAN COMMON SCHEME (FARNBOROUGH) PROVISIONAL ORDER.—Bill to confirm an amended Scheme with respect to Farnborough Common, Broad Street Green, Leach's Green, and Green Street Green, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes and Mr. Victor Cavendish 1472

Metropolitan Common Scheme (Hillingdon East) Provisional Order Bill.—"To confirm a Scheme with respect to Norman's or No Man's Land, Hillingdon, East," presented and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 62] .. 1472

Metropolitan Common Scheme (Farnborough) Provisional Order Bill.—"To confirm an amended Scheme with respect to Farnborough Common, Broad Street Green, Leach's Green, and Green Street Green," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 63] 1472

PETITIONS.

Licences (Renewal).—Petitions against alteration of Law; from Stockton-on-Tees; Armadale; Cynog; Samybridge; Southend on Sea; Hay; Goshen; Lower Mont; Bradford; Wellingborough; Macclesfield; Rotherham; Churchill, Nottingham; Clifton; Ashton; Ashton under Lyne (two); Inverary; Oldham; Ayr; Beaumaris; Oban; Rugby; Erith; Dartford (two); Leicester (three); Tunbridge Wells; Corwen; Limehouse; Grassmoor; New Houghton; Mansfield; Mansfield Woodhouse; Sherwood Forest; Paynton; North Petherton; Manchester; Bo'ness; Bathgates; Boscombe; Elsecar; Hoyland Common; Brynmawr; Beaufort; Garth; Llanwrtyd; Rhesyear; Newtown; Philipstoun; Fauldhouse; Chelsea (two); Ireston; Erith; Preston; Cwmtwrch; Irvine; Bath; Bridgwater; Openshaw; Norwood; Ecclesfield; Clun; Blackridge; Burnley; Winchburgh; Freesall; Brandeston; Uddingstone; Harthill; Tulse Hill and Norwood; Maesffynon; Pencae; Abermeurig; Wern; Peniel; Tibshelf; Aber; Borth; Blaenpennal; Stapleford; Thornton Heath; Blaenanerch; Chatham (two); Holm; Birkenhead; Penrhiw; Lampeter; Brynseion; Dewi Brefi; Bwlchyllan; Llechryd; Pontsaeson; Plymouth; Aberayron; Nuneaton; Hednseford; Seaton Delaval; Leslie; Necton; Ponteroyd; Aberarth (two); Bournemouth; Wigan (two); and Swansea; to lie upon the Table 1473

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Chelsea Hospital.—Account presented, for the year ended 31st March, 1903, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 56] 1473

Army (Ordnance Factories) (Appropriation Account).—Appropriation Account presented, of the sums granted by Parliament for the expense of the Ordnance Factories, the cost of the productions of which have been charged to the Army, Navy, and Indian and Colonial Governments, etc., and the Statement of the Surpluses and Deficits upon the Grants for the year ended 31st March, 1903, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 57] 1473

Trustee Savings Banks.—Copy presented, of Twelfth Annual Report of the Proceedings of the Inspection Committee for the year ended 20th November, 1903, with Appendix [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 58] 1474

Irish Land Commission (Proceedings).—Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of December, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1474

INEBRIATES ACTS, 1879 TO 1899 (REGULATIONS) (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Regulations for State Inebriate Reformatories in Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1474

TREATY SERIES (No. 3, 1904).—Copy presented, of Agreement between the United Kingdom and Italy, providing for the settlement by Arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the two Governments. Signed at Rome, 1st February, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 1474

TARIFF WARS (COMMERCIAL, No. 1, 1904).—Copy presented, of Reports on Tariff Wars between certain European States [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1474

AFRICA (No. 2, 1904).—Copy presented, of Report on the Trade and Commerce of the Somaliland Protectorate for the year 1902–3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1474

AFRICA (No. 3, 1904).—Copy presented, of Correspondence respecting the introduction of Chinese Labour into the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1474

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

TRADE CORNERS—AMENDMENT OF GAMING ACT.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1475

REFUSALS OF PUBLICANS' LICENCES.—Question, Mr. Corbett (Glasgow, Tradeston); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas 1475

PUBLICATION OF CIVIL SERVICE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 1476

COLONIAL LIFE INSURANCES AND INCOME TAX REBATE.—Question, Sir Seymour King (Hull, Central); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1476

DISMISSAL OF NEWTON-STEWART POSTMASTER.—Question, Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, N.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1476

CARRIAGE OF MAILS BETWEEN LIMERICK AND TRALEE.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley 1477

APPOINTMENT OF BRITISH CONSULS AT MUKDEN, ANTUNG, AND TATUNGKAN.—Question, Mr. Moon (St. Pancras, N.); Answer, Earl Percy 1478

RUSSIAN TONNAGE DUES AT PORT ARTHUR.—Question, Mr. Moon; Answer, Earl Percy 1478

COAL TAX—REPORT OF COMMISSION ON COAL SUPPLIES.—Question, Sir George Newnes (Swansea, Town); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1478

OFFICERS' UNIFORM IN THE INDIAN ARMY.—Question, Sir Seymour King; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1479

THE ROYAL INDIAN MARINES.—Question, Sir Seymour King; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1479

APPOINTMENT OF IRISH DISPENSARY DOCTORS.—Question, Sir Thomas Esmonde (Wexford, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1480

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AMALGAMATION OF IRISH UNIONS.—Question, Sir Thomas Esmonde; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1480

IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.—Question, Captain Donelan (Cork, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1480

INQUIRY INTO CONDUCT OF SERGEANT BYRNE OF HOOKEEN.—Question, Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1481

NORTH DUBLIN UNION—SUPPOSED DEATH OF AN INMATE.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1482

BUNCRANA SEWERAGE SCHEMES.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty (Donegal, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1482

DISCHARGE OF SEWAGE INTO THAMES AT SHEERNESS.—Question, Sir Joseph Dimsdale (London); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1482

PUBLICATION OF ARMY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1483

APPOINTMENT OF DENTAL SURGEONS TO FIRST ARMY CORPS.—Question, Sir Carne Rasch (Essex, Chelmsford); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1483

CONDEMNED WAR OFFICE FORAGE.—Question, Sir Carne Rasch; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1483

UNAUTHORISED PRIVATE CIRCULATION TO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT OF LORD MILNER'S DESPATCHES.—Question, Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1484

CENSORSHIP OF PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE IN THE TRANSVAAL.—Question, Mr. John Ellis (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield); Answer, Mr. Lyttelton 1484

THE AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT.—Question, Sir Walter Thorburn (Peebles and Selkirk); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1484

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

IMPERIAL SERVICE ORDER.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1485

WAR OFFICE RE-ORGANISATION.—Question, Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.), Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean), and Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1485

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR MEDALS.—Question, Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1487

MALTA AND GIBRALTAR BARRACKS—SANITARY CONDITION.—Question, Captain Norton; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1487

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ROSYTH NAVAL BASE.—Question, Sir John Leng (Dundee); Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admirality (Mr. Arthur Lee, Hampshire, Fareham) 1489

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IRISH ASYLUM LOANS.—Question, Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1497

POLICE PROTECTION AT CARRIGEEN.—Question, Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1498

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KINVARA HARBOUR.—Question, Mr. Duffy; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1498

FAIR RENTS IN COUNTY CORK.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork Co., Mid); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1498

GAYA BAY.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1499

STANDING ORDERS.—Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

1. "That in the case of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements), Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 6, 8, 8A, 8B, and 8C be struck out of the Bill; That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."
2. "That, in the case of the Rotherham Corporation, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 5 and 6 be struck out of the Bill, and that the powers to construct Tramway No. 4 be struck out of the Bill, unless the consent of the local and road authority be proved before the Select Committee on the Bill; That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."
3. "That, in the case of the Ryde Gas Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolutions agreed to. 1499

SELECTION (PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899 (COMMISSIONERS).—MR. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection; That, in pursuance of the provisions of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had selected the following fourteen Members to form the Parliamentary Panel of Members of this House to act as Commissioners:—Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. A. K. Loyd, Mr. McCrae, Mr. William Maxwell, Mr. Pym, Mr. Parker Smith, Sir Walter Thorburn, Sir John Tuke, Mr. Levy, Mr. James Reid, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk), and Mr. Wylie.

Report to lie upon the Table 1500

NEW BILLS.

Home Industries Bill.—"For the better regulation of Home Industries," presented by Colonel Denny; supported by Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. John Burns, Mr. J. W. Wilson, and Mr. Emmott; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 5th April, and to be printed. [Bill 64] 1500

Small Holdings Bill.—"To amend the Small Holdings Act, 1892," presented by Mr. Jesse Collings; supported by Colonel Long, Mr. Goulding, Sir Frederic Carne Rasch, Mr. Carlile, and Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 65] 1500

Purchase of Land (England and Wales) Bill.—" To provide facilities for the sale of land to occupying tenants and others in England and Wales," presented by Mr. Jesse Collings ; supported by Sir John Dorington, Mr. Spear, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Sir Lewis Molesworth, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Mr. William Mitchell, and Lieutenant-Colonel Pryce-Jones ; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 66] 1500

Agricultural Education in Elementary Schools Bill.—" For promoting agricultural education and nature study in Public Elementary Schools," presented by Mr. Jesse Collings ; supported by Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Rothschild, Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore, Sir Ernest Flower, Mr. Spear, Mr. Morrell, Colonel Webb, and Sir Fortescue Flannery ; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 67] 1501

Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales) Bill.—" To enable owners and occupiers in Wales and Monmouthshire to have effectual control over the Liquor Traffic," presented by Mr. Herbert Roberts ; supported by Sir Alfred Thomas. Mr. William Jones, and Mr. Herbert Lewis ; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th March, and to be printed. [Bill 68] .. .. .. - 1501

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS)—(ELEVENTH DAY).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [2nd February], " That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Question again proposed.

Mr. Herbert Samuel (*Yorkshire, Cleveland*) 1501
Major Seely (*Isle of Wight*) 1523

Amendment proposed—

" At the end of the Question, to add the words, ' And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is highly inexpedient that sanction should be given to any Ordinance permitting the introduction of indentured Chinese labourers into the Transvaal Colony until the approval of the colonists has been formally ascertained.' "—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Question proposed, " That those words be there added."

The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington*) 1533
Mr. Sydney Buxton (*Tower Hamlets, Poplar*) 1554
Mr. Martin (*Worcestershire, Droitwich*) 1560
Dr. Macnamara (*Camberwell, N.*) 1561

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [16th February] to Main Question [2nd February], " That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign,—*

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

" At the end of the Question, to add the words—' And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is highly inexpedient that sanction should be given to any Ordinance permitting the introduction of indentured Chinese labourers into the Transvaal Colony until the approval of the colonists has been formally ascertained.' "—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Question again proposed, " That those words be there added."

Mr. Duke (*Plymouth*) 1567
Mr. Broadhurst (*Leicester*) 1574
Mr. Cust (*Southwark, Bermondsey*) 1580
Mr. Labouchere (*Northampton*) 1594

Motion made, and Question, " That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Malcolm*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

WILD BIRDS PROTECTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—Read a second time, and committed for to-morrow. 1600

Adjourned at three minutes before Twelve o'clock.

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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

FIFTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, IN THE
FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 2nd February, 1904.

THE KING'S SPEECH.

THE KING, being seated on the Throne, and the Commons being at the Bar with their Speaker, His Majesty was pleased to make a most gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament, and then retired.

His Majesty's Speech was as follows—

My Lords and Gentlemen—

My relations with Foreign Powers continue to be of a satisfactory character.

My Government has concluded with that of the French Republic an Agreement which will, I trust, do much to promote the recourse to arbitration in cases of international dispute. Apart from its intrinsic value, the Agreement affords a happy illustration of the friendly feelings prevailing between the two Countries, of which striking proofs were given during My visit to France and that of the President of the French Republic to Great Britain, and of which further evidence has been furnished by a recent exchange of international courtesies.

Similar Agreements are in process of negotiation with the Governments of Italy and the Netherlands.

An Agreement has been concluded between My Government and that of Portugal for the settlement by arbitration of the frontier line between the possessions of Portugal in South-West Africa and the territory of the Barotse Kingdom. His Majesty the King of Italy has been pleased to accept the office of Arbitrator.

The Tribunal appointed under the Convention concluded on the 3rd March last between My Government and that of the United States has given a decision on the points referred to it. On some of these the verdict has been favourable to British claims; on others it has been adverse. Much as this last circumstance is to be deplored, it must, nevertheless, be a matter of congratulation that the misunderstandings, in which ancient Boundary Treaties, made in ignorance of geographical facts, are so fertile, have in this case been finally removed from the field of controversy.

The military operations in Somaliland are being pushed forward as rapidly as difficulties of climate and transport will permit. The successes recently obtained

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member by My troops under General Egerton will materially contribute to the destruction of the Mullah's power and the consequent pacification of the country. I have received cordial co-operation from the Italian Government, and from the Emperor Menelik of Abyssinia, who has organised a force which, by advancing from the west, will, it is hoped, materially assist the movement now in progress.

I have watched with concern the course of the negotiations between the Governments of Japan and Russia in regard to their respective interests in China and Corea. A disturbance of the peace in those regions could not but have deplorable consequences. Any assistance which My Government can usefully render towards the promotion of a pacific solution will be gladly afforded.

The scheme of Macedonian reforms proposed in February last by the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Governments, with the concurrence of the other Powers Signatories of the Treaty of Berlin, has been improved and strengthened in several important particulars. The revised scheme has been concurred in by the other Powers, and accepted, after a regrettable delay, by the Porte. The winter has brought a cessation in the disturbances which prevailed throughout Macedonia during the greater part of last year; and it is to be earnestly hoped that advantage will be taken of this respite in order to carry out those practical measures of amelioration which are so sorely needed in these unhappy regions.

Amongst these measures the organisation of the Macedonian Gendarmerie deserves a prominent place. I note with satisfaction that His Majesty the Sultan has appointed a distinguished General Officer of the Italian Army to take charge of this reform. He is to be assisted in the discharge of his task by other officers appointed by the Powers, and I have authorised the employment of a Staff Officer of My Army, aided by other British Officers, for this purpose.

I am gratified to observe that the Legislatures of the Commonwealth of Australia and the Colony of New Zealand have passed laws giving effect to the Naval Agreements entered into at the Colonial Conference of 1902, under which they assume a larger share than heretofore in the general Scheme of Imperial Defence. The New Zealand Legislature has also sanctioned a Tariff which gives a preference in its markets to the produce of this Country.

The insufficiency of the supply of the raw material upon which the great cotton industry of this Country depends has inspired Me with deep concern. I trust that the efforts which are being made in various parts of My Empire to increase the area under cultivation may be attended with a large measure of success.

With the concurrence of the Chinese Government, a Political Mission has entered Thibetan territory in order to secure the due observance of the Convention of 1890 relating to Sikkim and Thibet. A Chinese official has been despatched from Pekin to meet it, and I trust that an arrangement may be arrived at with the Chinese and Thibetan authorities which will peacefully remove a constant source of difficulty and friction on the northern frontier of My Indian Empire. Papers on the subject will be laid before you.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,—

The Estimates for the year will be laid before you. Although they have been framed with the utmost desire for economy, the burden imposed on the resources of the Country by the necessities of Naval and Military Defence is undoubtedly serious. The possibility of diminishing this burden is being carefully considered in connection with the general problem of Army and War Office Reform.

My Lords and Gentlemen,—

A measure for the purpose of dealing with the evils consequent on the Immigration of Criminal and Destitute Aliens into the United Kingdom will be laid before you.

A Bill amending the Law with respect to Licences for the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors in England will be submitted to you.

A measure for the Amendment of the Law with respect to Valuation Authorities and the Preparation of Valuation Lists will be introduced.

A Bill to Amend the Laws relating to Education in Scotland has been prepared for your consideration.

A measure will be introduced to Amend the Labourers Acts and the Housing of the Working Classes Act in Ireland.

Proposals will be laid before you for Amending the Workmen's Compensation Acts, for Amending the Law relating to Public Health, for dealing with the Hours of Employment in Shops, for Consolidating the Enactments relating to Naval Prizes of War, for removing, after the termination of the present Parliament, the necessity for Re-election in the case of Acceptance of Office by Members of the House of Commons, for Supplementing the Powers of the Congested Districts Board in Scotland, and for Amending the Law relating to Sea Fisheries.

I commend your deliberations to the care and guidance of Almighty God.

NEW PEERS INTRODUCED.

Sir Ughtred James Kay-Shuttleworth, Baronet, having been created Baron Shuttleworth of Gawthorpe, in the County Palatine of Lancaster, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

George Forrest, Lord Bishop of Bristol, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

SAT FIRST.

The Earl Fitzwilliam sat first in Parliament after the death of his grandfather.

The Lord Stanley of Alderley sat first in Parliament after the death of his brother.

The Marquess of Salisbury sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.

Norroy, King of Arms, attending, delivered at the Table (in the usual manner) a List of the Lords Temporal in the Fifth Session of the Twenty-seventh Parliament of the United Kingdom. The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

SELECT VESTRIES.

Bill, *pro forma*, read 1^a.

ADDRESS IN REPLY TO HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS SPEECH.

*EARL FITZWILLIAM: My Lords, in rising to address your Lordships' House for the first time, I venture to express a hope that I may be accorded that consideration which is so often extended to those who find themselves in my position. Your Lordships will have noticed that the opening paragraph of the Gracious Speech which has been read from the Throne, contains the now happily usual announcement that our relations with foreign countries continue to be friendly. Surely at no time has this familiar phrase to be repeated with more satisfaction than at the present moment, when the omission of it would spell all that your Lordships' House do not desire, and perhaps give a difficult and uncongenial task to the mover of this Address.

Your Lordships will have noticed with much satisfaction the announcement of the conclusion of a treaty of arbitration with France. The principle of arbitration is one which will always commend itself to this House. There is, my Lords, perhaps no nation with which it would be more advantageous for us to enter into Articles of Arbitrament than with our nearest neighbours. In the treaty recently concluded with the French Republic, the principle of arbitration is affirmed, subject to reservations which, if they limit the scope of the Agreement, do so in a manner which prudence no doubt requires. The treaty proceeds upon business lines. It lays down, in the first instance, that those matters which it has not been found possible for the contracting parties to settle by diplomacy shall be accurately ascertained; and, secondly, that a special Agreement in each case shall set out clearly the matters in dispute, and also the scope of the powers of the arbitrators. Great Britain and France have naturally availed themselves of the Hague Tribunal as an Arbitral Court for the purposes of the treaty, and it becomes clear that that Court, the institution of which we owe to the humane instincts and peaceful endeavours of the Czar, is destined to have important uses in the future. My Lords, everything which tends to a better understanding with France must inevitably appeal to your Lordships. As the representative of the French Republic at this Court has said so well lately—

> "The business relations of the two countries are so important that it would be absurd to allow anything to cause a rupture of them."

The Treaty to which I have alluded may be a very great or striking departure, but at least it is a step in the right direction, and may prove valuable as a means of avoiding the irritation consequent on the discussion of questions in which neither party sees its way to arrive at a settlement.

My Lords, while in this time of tension our minds are drawn to the events now taking place in the China Seas, we cannot pass over without due reflection those occurrences in the Near East which during the past few months have seemed to portend such grave possibilities. With reference to that paragraph in the Speech which deals with the reforms formulated by Austria-Hungary and Russia, acting in this matter in the name of all the Signatories of the Treaty of Berlin, the correspondence shows that while His Majesty's Government have been willing to give their assent to the proposals which these Powers have put forward for a settlement of the difficult state of affairs which has arisen, they have from the first regarded them as a minimum. In view of the approach of the season when the climate will no longer offer an obstacle to military operations, it is to be earnestly hoped that no time will be lost in giving effect to the necessary measures. In the case of these reforms not proving effectual, it is not beyond the scope of the Governments concerned to suggest other remedies. Indeed, His Majesty's Government have specially reserved to themselves the power of suggesting further reforms. I would especially invite your Lordships' attention to the project of a reorganised gendarmerie under a General of foreign nationality, in the service of the Imperial Ottoman Government, to whom military officers of the Great Powers will be attached. YourLordships will readily realise that the better administration of Macedonia constitutes an important factor in the maintenance of European tranquillity, and it is our duty and our interest to express an earnest hope that the measures recommended by Russia and Austria-Hungary may prove to have in them that which is essential to the good government of the races subject to the Porte.

As regards Thibet, the House is aware that last autumn a mission, with an escort to secure its safety, was despatched by the Government of India to meet Thibetan and Chinese officials, with a view to securing the future observance of the Articles of the Convention of 1890, and the trade regulations arranged under Article IV. of that Convention. The policy involved in the mission, I need scarcely assure your Lordships, is not to acquire territory, neither is it conceived in any aggressive spirit. The object in view is to obtain assurances that treaty obligations will be observed and that encroachment may not be renewed. I would recall to your Lordships that we have formerly had occasion to complain of aggression on the part of the Thibetans. I refer to the invasion by them of Sikkim in 1886. An aggressive attitude has again been adopted. Our representative has been treated with insolence; boundaries have been ignored; treaty obligations have been ignored. Your Lordships will easily recognise that His Majesty's Government have had no alternative but to seek and to insist on reparation. It is well known to this House how necessary—how essential it is in the East that we should claim and maintain rights which belong to us as the fruits of fair negotiation, and never for a moment tolerate that our representative should be treated lightly, far less subjected to indignity.

The next subject which claims the attention of your Lordships refers to our colonies. The House is aware that for many years past our Australasian Colonies—true to their inherent instincts of loyalty—have not allowed us to be alone in our maintenance of an Imperial Navy. But that which has been deemed by them in the past to be sufficient for that purpose, is now found not to be adequate to their self-imposed duty, and we observe—and observe, my Lords, I think with great pride—that our colonies are anxious and willing to increase their material support to the Navy. Whereas Australia and New Zealand before this date have only jointly contributed £126,000, they have now agreed to double their contribution. The mention of New Zealand, that Colony whose watchword is "Forward" in all that is patriotic, leads me to ask permission here to advert to another striking proof of the Imperial mind of that Colony. I refer to the Act passed in November last in the Colonial Legislature for the purpose of encouraging trade within the British Empire. That Act imposed duties of a very substantial amount upon foreign imported goods, and in one case—that of tea—entirely remitted the duty on that commodity when grown within the British dominions, whilst placing an additional equivalent duty on the foreign grown article.

My Lords, it has been truly said that times change and we change with them, and I would ask your Lordships to consider the application of the aphorism to our own case. For during the reigns of two Sovereigns the populations and necessities of these Islands have waxed and multiplied so exceedingly that probably those who formerly saw a sufficiency of existence within the area of these Islands would surely now, under changed and magnified conditions, share with us what has been so aptly described as "the dream of Empire." That dream, my Lords, has not been a dream which has been dissipated with the dawning day, for, unlike most dreams, it has found its realisation, and to-day it must be acknowledged by all subject to this Crown that there is a common tie which binds our colonies and ourselves to the Alma Mater here. And in this there is perhaps no finality. For who can say where a present controversy, which is now being discussed, not only through the length and breadth of the Empire but also throughout the civilised world, may eventually lead us? This theme offers a tempting subject for discussion, but I feel that I should be wanting both in respect to your Lordships' House, and also in regard for the rules of debate were I to pursue it further; but may I say that I do not believe that we have yet arrived at the final and ultimate destiny of our Empire.

In turning to the domestic topics foreshadowed in the Speech, the all important question of Army reform presents itself. Some comfort may be derived from the knowledge that the experiences which the late war have produced have been exhaustively examined by Lord Elgin's Commission, which collected a mass of material unique in our military annals. As one of the consequences of the Report of that Commission, the Prime Minister appointed a Committee, composed of three distinguished gentlemen, who have been engaged in elaborating a scheme of War Office reform, based on the lines of the Admiralty Board, the result of whose deliberations have now been before your Lordships for the last twenty-four hours. It would seem that, whatever the ultimate effect may be, their recommendations must appear to your Lordships at any rate to be thorough. They have recommended, amongst other things, besides a supreme direction in the Committee of Defence, the institution of a new Army Council which will terminate the inconvenience attaching to a system of dual control at the War Office.

There will be no difference of opinion amongst your Lordships that there is always more and more need for increased efficiency with regard to our Army. Notwithstanding a general feeling of admiration and respect for every unit of the British Army, whether at home or beyond the seas, still, with the experience of three years which we leave behind us of uninterrupted warfare, and with a prudent estimate of the future with its rumours of wars and possible wars, we should be doing an injustice not only to ourselves but also to that Army and that Empire, were we not to avail ourselves of this and every opportunity to add efficiency to our military system, and lay an adequate foundation to meet the unknown possibilities with which a world-wide Empire like ours is constantly brought face to face. In this connection perhaps it may be permissible to recall the oft-quoted platitude that on the efficiency and preparedness of our arms must to a very great extent depend the success of our diplomacy. It behoves us, moreover, never to forget that scarcely a year passes but that some portion of our Army is called upon, not only to be ready to act in support of our diplomacy, but also to act in defence of our possessions, wherever they may be.

In calling the attention of your Lordships to the subject of Alien Immigration, the House will recognise the advent of an old friend. We must all acknowledge, my Lords, that the problem has become an exceedingly serious one. This view is supported, not only by the condition of our labour market at the present minute, but also by the action of the Legislatures of some of the most progressive civilised countries of the world, as well as by the fact that in this country for many years past the subject has received the close attention of successive Governments. I do not wish on this occasion to enlarge on that aspect of the question or to refer in detail to the various inquiries and reports which will be in the recollection of your Lordships, but noble Lords will not lose sight of the fact that as a direct consequence of other nations having prohibited the influx of workers without any possible means of support and with no prospect of employment, we have naturally become the recipients of those who are found undesirable to other countries—countries quite as industrial as ours, and, moreover, many of them with virgin possibilities, in which respect they have an advantage over us with our congested and growing population and limited area of expansion.

There is another aspect of the question to be submitted to the House. It must be remembered that many of these immigrants arrive on our shores, not only without resources, but even without an elementary knowledge of our language, and are naturally attracted to our great centres of commerce. What, my Lords, is the consequence? It would appear to be that some few are fortunate enough to obtain employment, largely by underbidding our labour market, whilst others, finding themselves without knowledge or necessary information for procuring their daily bread, and driven to despair by hunger and hardship, lapse to the inevitable goal of criminality. These few remarks may be sufficient to allow your Lordships to perceive that there is ample justification for the legislation promised by His Majesty's Government.

Earl Fitzwilliam.

Turning to the Bill to amend the Workmen's Compensation Acts, I would submit to the House that the whole history of a workman's security for his stock-in-trade, which perhaps it is unnecessary for me to define as his labour —be it skilled or unskilled—has gradually been built up on liberal and equitable lines to its present state, and it will be well to remember that up to now provision has been made for all workmen engaged in dangerous trades, who, through no fault of their own, have become what has been termed "the wounded soldiers of industry." Heretofore these principles have been deemed sufficient as applying to a large number of workpeople, though not to all. But experience and the forward tendency of the age have shown, and are showing us daily, that a further step in advance may legitimately be adopted. It has become apparent that there are others who, although not exactly to be included in the radius of what were formerly known as dangerous trades, are yet entitled to protection by legislation. There are working men who in the pursuit of their daily task constantly incur risks as dangerous and frequent as do their more fortunate fellow-workers who have hitherto received the benefits of the Acts. Surely we are justified by such a consideration in our contention that the time has come to perfect and complete a measure which it has been deemed necessary to refer for examination and report to a Departmental Committee of the Home Office because it does not at present fully meet the case for which it was designed.

In passing from a subject affecting the prosperity and safety of the working classes, your Lordships will observe, on reference to the Gracious Speech, another subject affecting the moral and material welfare of those classes. I refer to the mention of a Bill to amend the law of licensing. Such a measure will be welcomed by all who do not push their convictions—however honestly and ardently cherished—beyond a judicious limit. The publican, in the absence of proved misconduct, has the right to pursue his calling—a lawful calling—without undue harassment. It is rather the tendency of the fanatic than of the well-balanced reasoner to invoke the fires of Smithfield to purge what he deems to be heresy. Your Lordships — in your desire for temperance—would be the last to argue that the grant of licences should be unchecked. But in dealing with a subject which gives rise to so many divergent views, the only rule of safety appears to reside in holding fast to a principle. My Lords, the principle which I think will commend itself to this House is that it is not in accord with the dictates of common honesty or justice that any man engaged in the liquor trade should be dispossessed of the means of earning his livelihood unless on proof of gross misconduct. Your Lordships may have an opportunity of observing later in the session that His Majesty's Government have not been unmindful of this principle. In conclusion, I beg to tender my most respectful thanks to your Lordships for the kind way in which you have listened to my remarks.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty in reply to the Gracious Speech from the Throne."—(*Earl Fitzwilliam.*)

LORD HYLTON: My Lords, in rising to second the Address, and to speak for the first time in this House, I, too, must ask for your Lordships' indulgence. Before attempting to discharge the duty which has been imposed upon me, I should like, in a few words, to refer to the great loss which the country and the House have suffered since Parliament was prorogued, by the death of the late Marquess of Salisbury. Others infinitely more qualified than myself will probably speak on this subject, but those who merely had the advantage of listening to him in this House, cannot fail to retain a lifelong impression of the wisdom of his utterances, the dignity of his address, the keenness and polish of his wit. And anyone who, like myself, has had some slight experience in the Diplomatic Service will, I think, feel convinced that his name was held in higher respect in every foreign country than that of perhaps any other Englishman for more than one generation.

There is one other topic to which I will still more briefly allude. A change has just taken place in the Leadership of this House. Speaking from these Benches one cannot forget the deep debt of gratitude which our Party owes to the noble Duke, the late Leader of the House. But I do not wish to say a word of a Party character on this occasion. In his capacity as Leader of this House the noble Duke enjoyed the goodwill of both sides alike, and I hope I shall not be considered presumptuous in expressing my belief that both sides alike cordially hope that he may still render great public service for many years to come, whatever quarter of the House he may occupy, whether in or out of office.

I now turn to the Gracious Speech from the Throne. With regard to the treaty signed between France and Great Britain, I think your Lordships will view with pleasure any extension of the system of arbitration as a means of arriving at a fair and peaceful solution of international disputes. The class of questions which will call for solution under the new treaty may be of a limited scope, but the principle adopted appears easily capable of enlargement; and your satisfaction in this matter will, I feel, be the greater, inasmuch as it affords a further proof of the amicable relations which happily exist between ourselves and our neighbours across the Channel. The same considerations apply to the hope expressed in the Gracious Speech of a similar treaty with Italy. Great Britain viewed with sympathetic interest the union of the Italian Peninsula under the sceptre of the House of Savoy, and the bonds of friendship which have ever since united the two countries have been lately cemented and confirmed by the interchange of visits between their respective Sovereigns. What I have said of the treaty with France and the proposed treaty with Italy applies with equal force to an arrangement with Holland and Portugal.

The conclusion or negotiation of treaties of arbitration with these European Powers affords striking evidence of the desire of His Majesty's Government to resort to this method of settling international differences. In the case of one difference of this kind His Majesty's Government have given practical proof of their belief in this policy by resorting to the assistance of a tribunal, not strictly speaking an arbitral tribunal, but one independent of the diplomacy of the two countries affected. The question of the Alaskan Boundary is not a new one. In the year 1825 the Russian and the British Governments signed a treaty or arrangement by which the boundaries of the Russian possessions in North West America and of our own territories in that quarter of the globe were defined. At that time no one seems to have entertained a suspicion that doubt or difficulty could thereafter arise owing to the terms in which the frontiers were described in the treaties. The whole region was sparsely inhabited, its geography little known, and most of its territory unexplored. So far as we can judge at the present day of what was passing through the minds of the statesmen of 1825 when they signed the treaty, they signed it under the impression that they were laying down boundaries which required no further definition. Time passed; in 1867 the United States bought Alaska from Russia; a larger population became settled in some parts of this hitherto almost uninhabited country, and, in consequence, questions arose as to what was meant by the definition of the treaty of 1825. On comparing the language of the treaty with more recently acquired geographical information, it was argued that more than one interpretation might be given to its meaning, and that in more than one portion of the frontiers. Papers laid before Parliament explain these details.

It sometimes happens that the provisions of a will lead to doubts and litigation, and in the end have to be decided in accordance with what the law lays down as having been the intention of the testator. This is precisely what has happened in regard to the Alaska boundary. No one can go into the witness-box at the present day and say with certainty what the negotiations of eighty years ago intended. But an exhaustive examination of the whole case has taken place before the Tribunal appointed for that purpose, and although it was so constituted that its deliberations might not have been conclusive, it was able to come to a conclusion.

The award has been favourable to the American rather than to the Canadian interpretation of the treaty of 1825. The extreme American claims have not been conceded, but the award is, undoubtedly, in favour of the American contentions rather than of the Canadian contentions. In one sense the question may be said to affect Canada more perhaps than the Mother Country, but in one sense only, for Great Britain can never feel indifferent to any matter touching the prosperity or welfare of the Dominion of Canada; and I say this, not as a vague compliment to Canadian loyalty and Canadian patriotism, but because I am sure that such are the sentiments of the people of this country towards Canada. The Colonial Secretary, in a speech to the Canada Club on the 19th ult., well pointed out that the consolatory speeches of well-meaning friends give little satisfaction to a litigant who has just lost his case—but I believe that in Canada, as well as in this country, many will be found ready to acknowledge that it is for the benefit of all parties that this question, which might at any moment have given rise to serious international differences, should have been set at rest.

With regard to the paragraph in the Speech relating to Somaliland, the House will have noticed with satisfaction the success of our troops under General Egerton—success all the more gratifying after one or two disappointments which have occurred in that region—disappointments not, I believe, owing to the strength or the character of the enemy, but merely to climatic conditions and to the want of water. Your Lordships will have seen with pleasure the statement in the Gracious Speech that Italy, whose sphere of influence adjoins our own in that region, has rendered us every possible co-operation, both by sea and by land.

Your Lordships will, I think, participate in the concern expressed in the Gracious Speech as to the differences which unhappily exist between Russia and Japan. Whilst we cannot shut our eyes to the critical nature of these differences, we must all share the hope that a peaceful solution may not be impracticable and honourable to both the nations concerned. We may reflect with some degree of satisfaction on the one hand on the pacific tendencies of the Emperor of Russia, which have been repeatedly proved both by word and action ever since he ascended the Throne, and, on the other hand, on the calm and statesmanlike attitude displayed by Japanese diplomatists throughout this crisis.

I now come to the paragraph respecting Macedonia. As far back as the time of the Treaty of Berlin, the Turkish Government undertook to introduce good administration into all the provinces of European Turkey, and the great Powers who were Signatories to that treaty incurred certain responsibilities in the matter. I think it must be admitted that great forbearance has been shown to the Turkish Government, and every allowance has been made by the Powers for the grave intrinsic difficulties which no doubt attend the institution of any form of government in Macedonia which would be equally acceptable to the various nationalities inhabiting those Provinces. Your Lordships are aware that these Provinces contain an extraordinary mixture of races and creeds, which must in any case render the task of their rulers a difficult one. But, my Lords, after making every allowance for the difficulties I have indicated, it has remained the clear duty of the Powers to press for reform in this region. Reforms have been pressed upon the Turkish Government times without number. Times without number the Sultan has promised to introduce adequate measures. Unfortunately, His Majesty's beneficent intention and pledges have failed to be carried into effect. What has been the result of this failure on the part of Turkey to provide a satisfactory administration in Macedonia? My Lords, the answer to that question can best be expressed by the simple word "Anarchy," and anarchy marked by all the horrors which usually attend such a condition of affairs. If proof were required of my statement, I would refer your Lordships to the Blue-book which has just been presented to Parliament respecting affairs in South-Eastern Europe, and which affords melancholy reading. The situation is aggravated by the animosity displayed towards one another by the different subject peoples.

Your Lordships will probably consider it unnecessary to endeavour to apportion the blame for the lamentable occurrences which have taken place among the various antagonistic parties. What we are concerned with is the fact that the ever increasing anarchy in this unhappy country reached such a pitch some twelve months ago that the great Powers unanimously concurred in intervention with a view to bringing about practical reform, and the task of seeing those reforms carried into effect has been entrusted to the Governments of Austria-Hungary and Russia. Your Lordships will see from the Papers laid before Parliament that the policy of His Majesty's Government has been, in co-operation with the other Powers, to urge by every possible means on the Porte the execution of the "Vienna Programme," strengthened later on by the more stringent provisions introduced after the meeting of the Austrian and Russian Emperors in October last. With regard to the more stringent provisions then adopted, I think your Lordships will give some credit to His Majesty's Government, and I would refer the House on that point to a despatch from the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Sir Francis Plunkett, dated September 29th last. I need not trouble your Lordships with all the details of the scheme of reform, but the appointment of two civil agents—an Austrian and a Russian—to act as assessors to the Turkish Inspector-General, together with the nomination of a distinguished Italian officer with the rank of General to re-organise and command the gendarmerie, form too important a feature in the scheme to be passed over in silence. These officers have now taken up their duties, and, including their subordinates, there will soon be, I believe, some 50 or 100 foreign officers distributed throughout Macedonia who will watch over the action of the Turkish troops; and this material supervision, backed up by the moral weight of the Concert of Europe, seem to attach a fairer chance of success to the present scheme of reform than has been the case on any previous occasion. The authors of this scheme do not claim perfection on its behalf, but the public declarations of European statesmen have been made in its favour, and all they ask is that the public will exercise a little patience in their criticisms as to its ultimate merits.

Before passing from this subject I should like to call your Lordships' attention to the conduct of our Consular representatives in Macedonia. Exercising rigid impartiality, they have incurred dangerous enmities on all sides; two of their foreign colleagues have been assassinated within the last twelve months; their own lives have been threatened, as you will see from the Blue-book, and many of their despatches have been practically written under fire. Our principal Consuls and Vice-Consuls in the Levant are selected from a body of picked men, and the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople would, I am sure, bear witness to the excellent services these gentlemen have rendered under exceptionally difficult circumstances. I think the House will consider that His Majesty's Government is very fortunate in being served by such excellent officers. The Gracious Speech announces a lengthy list of measures of domestic legislation. Some of them appear more appropriately fitted for discussion in another place, whilst others have been so amply and clearly dealt with by my noble friend that I do not propose to make any observations upon them. It only remains for me to thank your Lordships for the patience with which you have been good enough to listen to me, and to second the Address.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, before I come to the Speech from the Throne, I must refer to some events that have occurred since the adjournment of the House last year. The noble Lord the seconder of the Address spoke in most appropriate words of the great loss the House and the country have sustained since that time by the death of that distinguished statesman and orator, Lord Salisbury. I fully share the views the noble Lord so well expressed. Lord Salisbury filled a unique position in this House—a position of transcendent power; and I am quite sure of this, that no one who has been as long as I have been in this House can forget the lucid and eloquent words which always came from his lips without an error and without check. We deeply deplore that the country has lost him. When the noble Marquess resigned the Leadership of this House, which he held with such distinction so long, he was succeeded by my friend the noble Duke, to whom reference was also made by the noble Lord the seconder. The noble Duke has not held that position very long. He has been for little more than one session Leader of this House. I venture to remind your Lordships that when he undertook the duties of that position I said that I felt confident that his high character and his high ability would enable him to fulfil them to the satisfaction, not only of his own side of the House, but of us who sit on the Opposition side. My Lords, he amply fulfilled those prophecies.

And now, my Lords, as we have his successor here to-night for the first time since he has assumed the Leadership, I hope the House may pardon me if I refer to some historical events with which his great name is connected. The noble Marquess will not be the first of his family who has been Leader of this House. Fifty-two years ago the Marquess of Lansdowne of that day stood in his place, and, on the resignation of the Government of Lord John Russell, stated that he probably would no more again in an official capacity address this House. But he did address this House on one very remarkable occasion in the same year. It was the year signalised by the death of that great warrior, patriot, and citizen, the Duke of Wellington; a most eloquent reference to that noble Duke was made by the Marquess of Lansdowne, and I will quote what the noble Marquess further said:—

> "My Lords, I stand in somewhat of a peculiar situation before your Lordships, addressing you on this subject, because it may not be known to the greater number of your Lordships—indeed, there are not many now alive to recollect it—that the individual who has now the honour of addressing you, some forty-seven years ago, in his place in the other House of

Parliament when young in his Parliamentary life, was permitted and authorised by his colleagues of that time to call on that other House to do justice to the memory, and to provide for the family, of one of the greatest heroes that ever lived, and with whom alone, in the military annals of this country, the noble Duke, now no more, could be compared."

I mention this because it establishes a very interesting historical connection between the noble Marquess, now our Leader, and his grandfather, who, on two occasions, at an interval of forty-seven years, moved a vote and made an eloquent eulogy on our two greatest heroes—our greatest naval hero, Lord Nelson, and our greatest military hero, the Duke of Wellington. I am sure that we who know the noble Marquess may rely with confidence on the part which he will take in this House. We know his distinguished career in Canada and in India. We know from experience the ability and courtesy with which he has conducted many controversial debates in this House, when he has been the head of two important Departments of the State. I therefore feel assured that this House will allow me to congratulate, and will itself congratulate, the noble Marquess on the position in which he is placed, and will congratulate itself in having him as its Leader. I now come to the speeches of the mover and seconder of the Address. I have had considerable experience in this House, and I have seldom heard two more interesting speeches, or two speeches which commend themselves so much to the good feeling of the House. The noble Earl who moved the Address belongs to a very distinguished family, and I am happy to think that I can claim personal, though not political, friendship with him. The noble Lord the seconder to the Address made a singularly able, intelligent, and interesting speech. He showed great knowledge of diplomacy, and spoke in very appropriate words of many of the passages in the Gracious Speech. May I express this hope—that the desire of taking part in the public debates in this House in the future will not be damped so far as they are concerned, as I fear it has so often been, not only with young speakers but also with older speakers, by the cold and somewhat depressing atmosphere of this House?

I will now come to the words of the Gracious Speech from the Throne. I am glad to congratulate His Majesty's Government on the four paragraphs which commence the Speech. There is no subject in which, I think, the country takes at this moment a deeper interest than the question of arbitration. This subject has come prominently before the world in recent years owing to the action of the Czar and the conferences which took place at the Hague. I rejoice to think that His Majesty's Government have been able to use this noble and humane principle of arbitration—a principle which, we may hope, will not only diminish the terrible risks of war, with all the accompanying loss of life and sacrifice of treasure, but may, if properly followed, not only by ourselves, but by other nations, possibly lead to what we all must desire so heartily, and that is the diminution of the gigantic cost of preparation for war. That is one of the considerations which, I think, is prominently now before this country. The great cost of preparation for war is sapping, to a great extent, the resources of many countries, and it prevents the development of other most important reforms. It will probably affect the great question of education, to which it is so necessary to attend at this time in this country. It may also affect other social reforms; therefore, I do sincerely trust, if the example which His Majesty's Government has set with regard to arbitration is followed, we may find it will have some permanent and beneficial effect upon this enormous expenditure, which I believe everybody, to whatever side in politics he belongs, deeply deplores.

With regard to arbitration with our great neighbours in France, I sincerely rejoice at the friendly interchange of visits that have taken place between His Majesty the King and the President of the Republic; and I cannot help thinking that this country feels deep gratitude to our august Sovereign for the great impulse and support which he has given to this friendly feeling, and I venture to say we may trace, to a great extent, to his influence the successful movement which has been made with regard to foreign countries. It is satisfactory to know that the same process is going on with regard to Agreements with Italy and the Netherlands, and I should be glad if the noble Marquess is able to inform us that the Agreement with Italy has actually been made. I cannot also but congratulate His Majesty's Government on having successfully arrived at some conclusion with regard to the Alaska boundary. His Majesty the King has referred to that in very expressive words, and I think we may heartily rejoice, although in some respects we may regret part of the decision, if these misunderstandings which have been so fruitful of controversies in the past will now pass into the domain of history.

I now come to a subject as to which, I confess, I feel considerable regret. I refer to the war in Somaliland. On a former occasion I ventured to ask his Majesty's Government to give an explanation as to how far our troops were to go into the great desert and the waterless country which faced them. I pointed out what very grave results might follow such proceedings. I fear I was not very incorrect in my foreshadowing of what was about to take place. We have had long marches, and, I will not say reverses, but often very serious difficulties in our advance, and though now our arms seem to have been crowned with victory, the Mullah, or whatever he is called, like a will-of-the-wisp, flits in front of the troops, and there seems but little hope of catching him or surrounding him. I know we all feel great sorrow at the losses that have taken place, and perhaps I may say a word, and only one word, of great sympathy and affection to a friend of mine and a Member of your Lordships' House. We mourn the loss of his gallant son, and we sympathise most deeply with him and his friends in their bereavement. What I should like to know about this is, are expeditions far into a country like that essential to maintain the honour and dignity of the country, and to effect the objects we have in view? I know that negotiations with tribes of this sort are impossible; but is it impossible to occupy strongly posts round the settlements where our colonies are placed, and to defend them with the utmost strength, repelling any attack, and in that way punish these wild tribes, instead of having to pursue them in the manner in which we have had to pursue the Mullah? May I sincerely trust that the reference to General Egerton's victory may be the forerunner of the close of these operations, and that we may hear that the object we have in view has now been attained, and that we shall be able to withdraw our gallant troops, who have behaved, the officers especially, with such extraordinary gallantry, from the waterless land where they have been so long?

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The next paragraph touches a subject of the profoundest interest to this country. We have been watching with the keenest anxiety the negotiations which have been going on in the Far East between Russia and Japan. Two years ago we had a discussion in this House with regard to that subject and the treaty; but whatever may have been thought at that time of that treaty, it would not be proper or desirable at this moment to enter into any discussion upon it, and I shall entirely abstain from doing so. I sincerely trust that the hope held out by the noble Marquess, that the treaty would conduce towards peace, may have been, or will be, fulfilled, and that we may before long see removed the dark cloud which has been hanging over us, and which, though for the moment it hangs only over the East, may spread further and come nearer to us, and that we may see Japan developing her resources in peace and harmony. Anybody reading this paragraph of the Speech would believe that His Majesty's Government have been merely contemplating what has been happening in the East without taking any part whatever in it. There is no word of what they have done. There is merely the expression of a prospective hope that power may be exercised to promote a pacific settlement. I cannot suppose that this is all that has been done. I cannot help thinking and hoping that the good and friendly offices of His Majesty's Government have been warmly and courteously given to both Powers—and, possibly, more especially to the Power with whom we have a treaty—to induce them to come to amicable terms, and to prevent a war which would be so disastrous. I hope the noble

Marquess will be able to explain this paragraph.

With regard to Macedonia I have very little to say. It is a question which has been long before us. The noble Lord opposite said that all we wanted was patience. I would ask your Lordships, is not our patience nearly exhausted? The first solution proposed by Russia and Austria came to no good result. Then another solution was proposed, and during a great part of last summer the most fierce warfare was going on between the Turks and the insurgents in Macedonia. I fear that when the season becomes more favourable to the movement of troops we may again see this insurrection and this lamentable state of warfare arising in Macedonia; and I therefore feel considerably disappointed that at this season we cannot have more satisfactory assurances from His Majesty's Government. But I really hope that the Government, knowing what the feeling of the country is as to the necessity of, if possible, putting an end to the disastrous condition of affairs in this part of the dominions of the Porte, will do their utmost to support the Governments who are more active in the matter in arriving at a happy solution of this great question. I shall presently refer to the latter part of the reference to the acts of the New Zealand Legislature; but let me now express my satisfaction that the New Zealand Government, and I suppose also the Australian Government, have come to a new arrangement with His Majesty's Government in regard to their contribution towards the naval forces which protect our dominions across the sea. We have always held that we were doing the duty we were called upon to do as an Imperial Power in finding for the colonies the naval forces which they required, but we also thought that the colonies ought to contribute some sum towards the expenditure on those forces. That sum, certainly, has not been hitherto a large one. The noble Earl who spoke first had the advantage of knowing what we do not know—at least I do not know—of what the colonies are now proposing to do. I congratulate the Government on having made this advance towards getting a fairer payment for the work which our naval forces do in that part of the world.

I now come to the expedition to Thibet. We are promised Papers with regard to this question, and therefore I shall not go at great length into it. But there are one or two questions to which an immediate answer, I think, would be desirable which I wish to ask His Majesty's Government. The noble Earl opposite told us that this expedition has become necessary for various reasons. We shall look with great anxiety at the Papers to see what that necessity arises from. The convention of 1890 was carried out, I believe, when the noble Marquess was Viceroy of India. That Convention was made direct with the Chinese Government. Now we hear, certainly, that, "with the concurrence of the Chinese Government," this expedition has gone on; but why has the tradition that existed in India before, that negotiations should go direct to the Chinese Government, been departed from, and why have these negotiations not been made with the Chinese Government? There is another question. We know that this force is advancing into a mountainous country, a country where the utmost rigour of cold prevails. We are told that the cold there is somewhat like that which prevails on Mont Blanc. We know that the expedition has gone at the most inclement season, and, if the newspapers are correct, that it has already lost nearly the whole of the animals of transport. I want to ask what is the pressing need and the wrong that we have to redress which require this force to be sent at such an inclement season? I have another point. We know that in the Government of India Act, 1858, there is a particular clause, the 55th I think, with regard to the Indian Government not using its funds for the purposes of an expedition outside its own boundaries. I want to know whether the Indian Government have taken that particular clause into consideration. Is this a mere friendly group of visitors sent by the Government of India to Thibet, or does it mean more? We hear of an escort of something like 500 going with the expedition, carrying guns and other munitions of war, and there is a large body, numbering, I believe, some 2,000 men, who are keeping up the communications. I am bound to say that at present the expedition seems to be much more of a military expedition than a mere friendly diplomatic visit to the natives. I do not suppose, from what I have heard and from what I have learned, that there is much danger of our troops being attacked, or, if they are attacked, of any disaster happening to them; but there is no doubt they are suffering considerable hardships and privations.

With regard to the Estimates, I do not say much. The Estimates belong more to another place; but there are important considerations which I shall touch upon presently which affect the interests of the whole country and should not be lost sight of by your Lordships' House. I read, however, that His Majesty's Government are really considering the possibility of diminishing the terrible outlay on naval and military defence which is now weighing down the country, and may in the future be a very serious drawback to our prosperity, and I sincerely trust that they may be able to effect economy in this great expenditure. I now come to the omnibus clauses with reference to administration. I hardly think there is any what I may call a great political administrative Bill mentioned. There are, I will not call them friends, because some of them I do not at all like, but there are some old stagers travelling on the Parliamentary road which we all know very well. There are the aliens; there is the question which interests so much some of my noble friends on this side of the House—the hours of employment in shops; there is the Compensation Act, and there are other proposals; but I do not see one Bill which was pressed forward last year—namely, the Bill with regard to the Port of London. There is one Bill on which I want to make some remarks. That is a Bill with regard to the necessity for re-election in the case of acceptance of office by Members of the House of Commons. I can well understand that His Majesty's Government may desire very ardently to carry this Bill. His Majesty's Government have probably had more experience in remodelling Governments than any Government within our memory, and it is just possible that in trying to distribute offices among its supporters His Majesty's Government have sometimes been unable to make the best selection owing to the difficulty of elections. I can, therefore, quite imagine that His Majesty's Government may desire to have the existing law altered. But we do not quite look at it in the same way. I admit that in the past the Party to which I have the honour to belong have also altered the law. I think it was their Bill in 1869 which did away with the dissolution on the demise of the Crown. There has also been a measure to render unnecessary an appeal to the constituencies on a mere change of office within the Government. But this Bill goes still further. If there is anything in the old principle that a Government should not remain in office or be encouraged if it has not the support of the constituencies of the country, that old doctrine, I think, is not quite exploded, and there will be a good many people who will still wish to see it applied.

The Bill with regard to licensing and the sale of intoxicating liquors in England is a matter of very great importance. Much depends upon the way in which His Majesty's Government frame their proposals. We on this side of the House will deprecate most strongly any attempt to deprive the magistrates of their full discretion in this matter. I do not believe that there is any case whatever to show that the magistrates have exceeded their powers; and, if this Bill goes any length to thwart the magistrates in the exercise of their discretion, that measure will receive most determined opposition from this side of the House and from our friends in the other House. With regard to the Valuation Bill, it is difficult, in the words of the Gracious Speech from the Throne, to say how far it may go. It may be a mere technical measure altering slightly the machinery with regard to the valuation authorities in their preparation of the valuation lists. If, however, it follows the lines laid down by the important Commission, of which Lord Balfour was Chairman, I can assure His Majesty's Government that we shall give it the very best consideration in our power; for, in my opinion, there is no measure so much wanted at this moment as a

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thorough, complete, and wise reform of all matters connected with the incidence of local taxation. If the measure is of that character I do not think His Majesty's Government will find any obstructive action on the part of the Opposition.

I have now touched upon the various points which have been referred to in the Speech from the Throne. But there are other questions which have been omitted and which, in my opinion, are of the utmost moment, and ought to be at once brought before the attention of Parliament. It is a remarkable thing that in this Speech there is no reference whatever to South Africa. At the last meeting of Parliament we had constant references to South Africa. At this time last year a distinguished statesman, who was then Colonial Secretary, had not returned from his tour in South Africa. He had been there conducting most important negotiations, and he had proposed and apparently brought about the settlement of a considerable number of questions. That gave rise to Bills and to very important discussions. Parliament, I think, will demand a great deal of information with regard to South Africa. We want to know how far the settlement of the country is progressing, and how far the farmers who were dispossessed of their farms are settling down. We want to know what number of troops have been withdrawn from that country, and what number of troops remain there. We want also to know what has been done with regard to the financial arrangements which were discussed so much last year. What has become of those loans? What has become of a certain £10,000,000 which was to be paid towards the expenses of the war into the Imperial Exchequer, guaranteed by millionaires in the Transvaal? We hear rumours that this payment is not to be made, or that it is to be deferred. We want to know whether that is to be the case. All these questions require the attention of the Government, and explanation by them.

There is also the question of labour in the Transvaal. I cannot conceive a greater question than that. We hear that it is proposed to introduce into the Transvaal—it may be wrong, but rumour says something like 100,000 Chinese. What will result from that? It will completely revolutionise the labour organisation in the Transvaal, and will have a profound effect in other colonies of South Africa. We hear more than rumours— we hear reports of what has been done in the Cape Colony, where, if I am not mistaken, there is pretty nearly a unanimous opinion against this action. Not only is this a serious thing in regard to the Transvaal, but it is also a serious thing in regard to the question of federation. If this dispute arises between the colonies will it not retard this great measure which some statesmen who know South Africa well look to as the final solution of the difficulty? I wish to be clearly understood. At the present moment the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony are Crown colonies. When we deal with self-governing colonies we have a prime principle on which we base our views, and that is that in all matters of internal government those colonies are to be supreme, and they are to settle what they consider right for the prosperity and benefit of the subjects of the Crown in those colonies. I at once admit that, if this question had been submitted to a self-governing colony, and if they had decided that it was necessary to introduce this large number of Chinese labourers, then, however much one might have disliked it, and dreaded the moral and social effect of such an act, and the position in which these Chinamen themselves would be under the restrictions under which they would be placed, I certainly should have accepted the position. But how can we tell, until free and responsible government is given to the Transvaal, that they are in favour of this stupendous and gigantic step? I think this is a matter that requires the profoundest attention. It was only yesterday that we had the Papers on the subject. It is impossible in twenty-four hours to deal with a Blue-book on the subject of the deficiency of labour in the Transvaal. But I notice there is a minority and a majority Report, and I rather think there is no mention of the immigration of Chinese labourers into Africa. Then, we have not got the important ordinance which has been passed. I have said enough to show that this is a matter of great importance; and I should like the noble Marquess to say whether I am right in the belief that the Colonial Secretary has declared, in a letter which I think appeared in a newspaper within the last few days, that he does not intend to give his assent, or to allow this great change to be effected, until full discussion has taken place in Parliament.

Now I come to another matter which has been referred to to-night—I mean the Report from the Royal Commission which was presided over by Lord Elgin. I consider that a very important and a very remarkable document. It is couched in the most moderate terms. There is no attack upon the Government, no indictment of the Government, and in some respects it even defends the Government. But anybody who studies the evidence in that Report will, I think, find a most serious indictment against the Government of the day for their conduct before the war and in the early part of the war with regard to the preparations and other matters. There are some who say that this report is not sufficient, because it only deals with the preparation for the war, the ammunition, transport, and other matters up to the time of the occupation of Pretoria. There is a great deal after that which also requires consideration. Well, I do not for a moment deny that there may be something in it; but I do think that the evidence given is a very serious matter, and that Parliament cannot for a single moment overlook it. I have heard it stated in very high quarters that we must let bygones be bygones, and that we are not to consider that which has happened in the past; we are told to let the dead bury their dead—hat we must only look to what His Majesty's Government have done and what it is now proposed to do, the changes which are probably imminent in consequence of the evidence given before the Commission. I do not subscribe to that at all. I fully admit that there have been great changes. We have, indeed, had two changes in the office of Secretary of State for War, my noble friend opposite has become Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and his successor has become—has been promoted, if I may say so, to be—Secretary of State for India. I do not think that these changes should prevent us from discussing the past.

The scheme at this moment presented to Parliament, and which, no doubt, is a very important one, must receive the most careful attention of Parliament. The Report covers the whole ground, and touches what took place in the preparations for the war. No doubt the Secretary for War is chiefly responsible for a great deal that has been found fault with. At the same time there are other members of the Government who must be held responsible. There was the then Colonial Secretary who knew of our want of preparation; he knew the position we were in while the negotiations were going on. I think he very rashly rushed to conclusions the negotiations when he knew that at any moment he might have expected that his action would bring about hostile action on the part of Mr. Kruger. He is responsible; but most of all I cannot allow that we are to absolve the Cabinet from responsibility for this great default. I do not want now to go at any length into this matter; I merely raise it to show that I shall have something to say on the subject of the blame which is to be attached to the Government. My Lords, I find that there was no plan of campaign before the war began. There was a great neglect of the information placed at the service of the Government by the Intelligence Department as to the strength of the forces of the Transvaal, the amount of ammunition, and the number of the guns that they had. All this seems to me to have been overlooked. Then as to ourselves, there was an insufficient supply of ammunition, and there was an enormous number of rifles with most imperfect sights, one of the most dangerous things to be placed in the hands of skilled riflemen. Here they had given them rifles which would not shoot properly. There are many other points which can be raised against the Government in regard to the conduct of the war. The country must be shown what has been the cause of these great errors; and I venture to say that the proper responsibility should be fixed on members of the Government, and the Government itself, for what I am afraid led to the prolongation of the war, and in many cases brought about disaster, and certainly enormous expense, to the country. We on this side of the House shall not lose any opportunity that we may have to bring these matters before the House, which is so well able to discuss questions connected with the military and naval forces.

I have only one subject more to which I shall refer, and I fully admit that it is a subject which is of the greatest national importance that can be brought before the country. I refer to the fiscal question. We all know that since Parliament was prorogued, in every political centre in the country, discussion has been going on on one side and the other with regard to this great fiscal question. It has been conducted with great courage on one side by one man, and it has been conducted on the other side by his opponents with great ability. Now I cannot help referring to the manner in which this discussion has been carried on. The result of the action of the late Colonial Secretary—one result—is that it has entirely transformed and changed His Majesty's Government. First of all came the retirement of Mr. Chamberlain. It was followed by the resignations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary for India. Later on came the almost more important resignation of my noble friend the Duke of Devonshire, who, during the whole of the Government of Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour, had been one of the strongest pillars of that Government. At the same time another distinguished member of the Government, the Secretary for Scotland, highly respected not only in this House, but in Scotland, resigned. There were certain minor changes; and I venture to say that the Cabinet which existed before these resignations took place, before this transformation, was entirely changed.

I cannot go into the question which is likely to be raised here; I shall not to-night go into detail of the manner in which these changes took place. But I shall venture to point out the remarkable changes which have taken place in the line of the argument of the principal speaker, Mr. Chamberlain, in the conduct of his great campaign. He at first argued the question as an Imperialist. We were told that we must do something to keep united with us our colonies, that we must make some sacrifices to do that, in the building up of a great Empire, and that it was of the utmost importance that this policy of his should be carried out. I confess that it always seemed to me a strange time to propose that special measures should be taken to unite our colonies immediately after the marvellous loyalty, patriotism, and devotion to this country shown by so many colonies during the war. It seemed to me almost an insult to say that we were obliged by some fiscal measure to secure that loyalty which, before any such preference had been given, had already been displayed by the colonies. Well, that was the commencement. We were told that we must sacrifice something to secure this union and co-operation. Any increase in cost to the people was to be made good to the working classes in various ways. At one time it was by old-age pensions. That has disappeared. In the autumn campaign we hardly ever heard anything, or very little, about preference. Protection took its place. That was to meet the attitude of the colonies themselves. We know from many sources of information that Canada objects to give us any preference or to abate in any way her duties, because Canada considers that that would injuriously affect her manufactures.

We have heard something with regard to New Zealand. We have lately seen a very eloquent and patriotic speech made by Mr. Seddon in introducing a measure with regard to tariffs. It may be that in one respect he has offered to do something as regards tea, but in every other respect he has not abated in the slightest degree the duties against British manufactures. The remarkable thing is that what is the most striking thing in this Bill is the proposal to give reciprocity to foreign countries. This is offered to any foreign country which is willing to make a reduction of its duties. I will venture to say that one reason for this change of attitude on the part of the ex-Colonial Secretary was that he found that the only force which was a potent one with the constituencies was this question of Protection. Therefore, I maintain that Mr. Chamberlain's policy is now one of Protection. If that is so, your Lordships will understand how those with whom I act, who are strongly opposed to Protection, will make every effort to withstand and defeat a policy we consider so dangerous to the prosperity of the industry and trade of this country, and which will bring such difficulties on the working classes by increasing the cost of food and of necessaries of life. I wish to press on His Majesty's Government that they should declare their position. We have had statements from the Prime Minister, statements in which he has said he was quite ready to alter the fundamental fiscal position which has prevailed through generations, and what does this mean? Does it not indicate a wish to return to Protection? I am aware that he has said he is a free trader; but I cannot see how he can retain that character. He has given his benediction to Mr. Chamberlain's policy, but he has said we must not be in too great a hurry. He thinks it would be premature to adopt this policy now, that caution must be used in advancing on the lines of Mr. Chamberlain's policy, but he certainly does hold out a hope that at some future day, when the country has been prepared by the advocacy and the propagandism of Mr. Chamberlain, it may adopt preferential duties with our colonies, adopt the taxation of food; and there are those who support Mr. Balfour who would conform to that.

But is that the policy of His Majesty's Government? If we look to members of the Government we find various opinions expressed. We find these opinions of the Prime Minister, which, on the whole, are distinctly favourable to Mr. Chamberlain, supported by the new Colonial Secretary and others—I am not sure whether my noble friend opposite, the Minister for Agriculture, supports that view. On the other hand, there are Ministers who have repudiated that policy most distinctly; there is the noble Lord, now Postmaster-General, who made a most remarkable speech the other day, in which he said that though he was a supporter of Mr. Balfour, he would not remain in the Government if the Government took up anything like a policy involving taxation of food. Other Ministers have expressed similar views. But what is the Government policy—for a policy they must have—on this great question? It is impossible for a Government to remain without a clear and distinct declaration of their position. This is a point I would like to put to your Lordships—is it right that a policy should be dangled before the country, should be held in suspense for a long time? The Prime Minister has said it cannot be decided for some time, and there is an idea that not one election can decide it. Will not this hesitation have a very injurious effect on the finance, the commerce, and the industry of the country? There are continual declarations from the President of the Board of Trade and others that the trade of the country is declining, but I am convinced this is an entirely erroneous view, and that trade was never more prosperous in this country, though I admit some changes may be necessary, for we have to meet a keen and active competition from other nations, and must look to ourselves and see that we are fully armed for the struggle. The people of this country must be fully educated to meet this competition, but I cannot believe or admit that the trade and prosperity of this great country is on the wane. Such declarations cannot but be detrimental to the interests of this country abroad, and also at home. This is not agreed to by some who say the change is so far off that it does not affect the people at the present time, but I venture to think it must have a serious effect on the trade and industry of the country. I trust that very soon we shall have a decision that will remove all doubts that exist. I very earnestly appeal to His Majesty's Government to declare themselves on this subject. I understand the position taken up by Mr. Chamberlain. It is quite clear; but I defy anyone, however ingenious, however able, to understand the position of the Government. I appeal to them to make their position clear. It is their duty to do so. Though this is a matter that should principally be debated in another place, we shall not here sit quiet, but take every opportunity we can—and we hope we may not be entirely without support from some Members on the other side of the House whose patriotism will come before their adherence to Party—to bring this question before the country, if possible to awaken the people to a proper sense of the stupendous effect this great change would have on the prosperity of the country.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, before I address myself to the controversial matters with which the noble Earl has dealt in the course of his speech, there is one subject upon which I will ask to be allowed to say a very few words. It was touched upon by the noble Earl and also by the noble Lord who seconded the Address. I refer to the great loss, the irreparable loss, this House has sustained by the death of the late Lord Salisbury. It has been truly said his position in this House was unique. We think of him as a great statesman, as a great Party Leader, as a great diplomatist, but to us who had the advantage of sitting with him in this House he will always appear above all things a great and illustrious Member of the House of Lords. No one ever took a more prominent part in upholding the best traditions of this Assembly, no one imparted more authority and dignity to its debates; and even towards the close of his life, when those of us who watched him closely noticed, with pain, signs of the weariness which resulted from long years of public service and responsibility, even then we listened to him as we listened to no other Member of the House of Lords. Surely we who lament him may say of him, with regret and reverence, "Oh, how much wisdom sleeps with thee." I pass from this subject in order to associate myself with the noble Earl in congratulating my two noble friends who moved and seconded the Address. I do not think I ever had the privilege of hearing what has always seemed to me to be a most difficult and most embarrassing duty performed with greater taste and ability. My noble friend the mover has had the advantage of apprenticeship in the House of Commons, and has no doubt derived benefit from the invigorating atmosphere of that Assembly. The noble Lord who seconded served his apprenticeship in the Diplomatic Service; and I must say that, as I listened to his well-chosen words and noticed the felicity with which he expressed himself, I felt that the House of Lords had gained a valuable recruit and that the Diplomatic Service had lost one who would have taken a useful, I might almost say, an eminent part in that profession. Both my noble friends, speaking with becoming modesty, asked your Lordships to grant to them the indulgence never refused to those who address the House of Lords for the first time, and I ask leave of my noble friends to stand alongside them for once. I cannot claim from your Lordships indulgence as a young and inexperienced Member of this Assembly, but I am reminded by what has been so kindly and considerately said by the noble Earl that I need the indulgence of your Lordships at least as much as my two noble friends. We in this House always succeed in maintaining courteous and considerate relations between those who sit on different sides of it; and I must express my thanks to the noble Earl and tell him how deeply I am touched by the kindly references he made, not only to myself, but to a predecessor of mine, who bore the name I now bear with a distinction to which I can never aspire.

I now pass to the different matters which the noble Earl referred to in the course of his remarks. The noble Earl was good enough to congratulate His Majesty's Government on the contents of the first four paragraphs of the Speech from the Throne. I feel sure that all of us will regard with genuine satisfaction the fact that so considerable an approximation has taken place between the great country which is our neighbour on the other side of the Channel and ourselves. I do not think you will find, either here or in France, that too much credit is taken to themselves by the diplomatists of either country for this happy condition of things. It is due, no doubt, partly to those courtesies which have recently been exchanged and to which reference has been made; but I believe it to be due mainly to a deep-seated conviction on the part of the peoples of the two countries that there is no real divergence between our interests, that the greatest of our common interests is peace, and that there is no greater security for the peace of Europe than that it should be desired both by France and Great Britain.

The Treaty of Arbitration, to which reference is made in the Gracious Speech, is a very strictly limited one, but it is valuable as giving expression to the feelings which I have just endeavoured to describe; and it has been followed by a similar Treaty with Italy, signed within the last two-days, and by a Treaty with the Netherlands, which is in course of negotiation. In the case of the United States we have endeavoured to translate into practice what in the treaties with France and Italy is laid down as a matter of principle. It is quite true that the tribunal which has lately disposed of the Alaska difficulty, was not, strictly speaking, an arbitral tribunal. It affords, nevertheless, an illustration of the possibility of settling by other than diplomatic means a long-standing and dangerous international difference. I describe it as dangerous because the frontier of Alaska might at any moment have brought us into serious and acute controversy with the United States. And for this reason, that the Alaskan frontier might have been challenged not only by diplomatic protests, but by overt acts on the part of the population which has resorted to that remote country for the purpose of pursuing the mining industry. Any serious clashing on the spot between the settlers belonging to Canada, on the one hand, or to the United States on the other, might at any moment have brought about an incident of the utmost gravity. It is therefore most fortunate that we should have been successful in removing that question from the path of our diplomacy. The result in the finding of the tribunal has no doubt not been entirely satisfactory to us, and in this respect I do not draw any distinction between the interests of the Dominion of Canada and our interests. The question at issue is a question of the position not merely of the frontier of Canada, but of the frontier of the British Empire, for the defence and the integrity of which we are responsible. But, my Lords, I do not think that any one seriously expected that we should obtain a favourable verdict on all points; and I am inclined to find some consolation in the fact that our military and naval advisers tell us confidently that the two islands in the Portland Channel which, under this award were given to the United States, are of no strategical value whatever.

The noble Earl expressed disappointment that more progress had not been made in bringing about an improvement in the position of the long-suffering and misgoverned population in Macedonia. The policy of the Government has been based upon a desire to avoid a breach of the peace in Macedonia, and upon an equally sincere desire to bring about an amelioration of the condition of the population. I connect these two objects very closely, because there can be no doubt that if a conflagration were to break out in the Balkan Peninsula the greatest and most immediate sufferers would be the unfortunate inhabitants of those vilayets in which the recent disturbances have occurred. We have, at any rate, come to the conclusion that we could not do better than support the two Powers—Austria-Hungary and Russia — in the schemes of reform which they have put forward. But, as the Papers which have been laid on the Table, I believe to-day, will show your Lordships, we have spared no efforts in order to give to these schemes as much completeness as possible, and we have made it perfectly plain to all concerned that if these schemes should fail to produce the desired result, we reserve to ourselves entire liberty to take into consideration and to propose alternative and more far-reaching measures. I think we may fairly say that something has been achieved, and I trust that advantage will be taken of the next few weeks in order to accelerate the introduction of those reforms. The situation is undoubtedly an extremely grave one, and I can conceive no greater misfortune than that, either on account of dilatoriness on the part of those who are putting forward these measures, or on account of obstructiveness on the part of the Porte, we should find ourselves once more at the beginning of what may, I suppose, be called the fighting season without any real progress having been achieved in the direction which we so much desire.

In his reference to the negotiations between Japan and Russia, the noble Earl asked me whether he might infer from the language of the paragraph in His

Majesty's Speech that His Majesty's Government had used their good offices with the object of bringing about an understanding between the Powers. My answer to that is this. I believe it to be an axiom of diplomacy that it is not desirable to offer your good offices unless you have reason to know that they are desired. We have not been invited to extend our good offices; and it is indeed, I believe, an open secret that one, at all events, of the disputants has intimated plainly that he does not desire mediation at the present time. We have therefore, I think, been perfectly correct in advising the use in the Gracious Speech of language which shows that our desire certainly is to promote a pacific solution, and that if the opportunity of contributing to that end should happily present itself, we should be glad and ready to avail ourselves of it.

The noble Earl referred to the paragraph in which the Speech deals with the military operations in Somaliland. He expressed a very natural feeling of impatience at the manner in which these operations are being prolonged. I feel quite as impatient as he does. But it is our duty to bear in mind that the country is one in which the forces engaged have not only to contend with a formidable enemy, but with conditions of climate which render operations most arduous and most difficult. These operations in their earlier stages were certainly not wholly unsuccessful; but they were not so conclusive but that we thought it necessary to enlarge their scope and to endeavour to deal a crushing blow to the personage who has been commonly referred to as the Mullah. The noble Earl asked us why we could not establish ourselves strongly within our own settlements and avoid entangling ourselves in operations outside their limits. The answer to that is that we have not been allowed to do so. The noble Earl is no doubt aware that we not only have settlements actually on the coast, but that there are tribes immediately adjoining those settlements who have entered into arrangements with us, and who have a right to claim our protection. Beyond those tribes there lies the friendly kingdom of Abyssinia, and beyond that our East African Protectorate. It is impossible for us to allow a region of this kind to fall a prey to a Mahdi or to a Mullah, or indeed to any one who is capable of organising a fanatical movement, the extent of which it would be impossible to foretell. You may find it convenient to leave things alone and to allow the movement to develop itself, but you have always to pay for it in the long run. We at any rate have determined that these operations shall not conclude until the Mullah has been taught a sufficient lesson. The extent of the success achieved by Colonel Egerton can scarcely yet be fully gauged, but there is no doubt that he has dealt a very severe blow to the Mullah's prestige and that our position in Somaliland is at this moment infinitely stronger than it was a few months ago.

The noble Earl spoke in feeling terms of the losses by which these operations have been attended. In all such operations we pay a penalty in the shape of a long casualty list which invariably includes an undue proportion of British officers. There is no attribute of our British officers of which we have more reason to be proud than their power of leading troops and levies drawn from comparatively uncivilised countries and races. The secret of that success is this, that they never shrink from exposing themselves wherever danger is greatest, with the result that they too often pay the penalty with their lives; I am sure every Member of your Lordships' House will join with the noble Earl in offering our sympathy to a popular and much respected Member of the House of Lords who has suffered a grievous and lamentable bereavement in this recent action. It is satisfactory to know that these operations have been considerably assisted by the Italian Government, which has allowed us to make use of Italian ports, and has in particular done a great deal to suppress that pernicious traffic in arms which does so much to aggravate the difficulties of those engaged in warfare of this kind.

Then the noble Earl asked me a series of questions with regard to the mission to Thibet, and expressed a hope that an explanation would be given of the circumstances in which that mission originated. We are laying Papers on the

Table, and the Noble Earl will learn from them that this affair had its origin, not, as seems sometimes to be supposed, in a British invasion of Thibet, but in a Thibetan invasion of a State under British protection. That event took place some years ago. We treated the Thibetans with the utmost leniency; we did not deprive them of any territory, we did not ask them for any indemnity. All we did ask for was that they should enter into a neighbourly agreement with us, under which the frontier was to be clearly demarcated and facilities were given to persons engaged in trade across it. That agreement, so entered into, has been constantly broken; the boundary pillars have been removed, peaceful traders have been interfered with, our agents have been turned back, our letters have been returned unopened, and British subjects have been arrested and carried away. It is impossible that we should tolerate conduct of that kind, and the Government of India very properly determined to insist on obtaining a more satisfactory arrangement for the future. Then, says the noble Earl, "Why have you not been content to deal with this matter through the Chinese Government?" The answer to that is this. In 1890 we did deal with the Chinese Government, and the agreement then entered into by the Chinese Envoy, aided by a Thibetan assessor, was absolutely repudiated by the Thibetans. On this occasion, although we have again invoked the assistance of China, we have done so quite in vain. The Chinese Government began by sending down an officer of inferior rank and quite incapable of assisting the conduct of the negotiations. The Chinese representative at Lhasa endeavoured to dissuade the Thibetans from continuing their opposition, but he attempted to do so in vain. Finally, it may interest the noble Earl to know that the Chinese Government deputed an envoy to go to Thibet for the express purpose of settling these matters; that that envoy left Pekin in December, 1902, and is still on his way to Lhasa. I think, therefore, I am justified in saying that the Chinese Government are a broken reed to lean upon.

The noble Earl asked whether this Thibetan mission does not come within the purview of the 55th clause of the Government of India Act. That clause runs thus—

> "Except for preventing or repelling actual invasion of Her Majes y's Indian possessions, or under other and urgent necessity, the revenue of India shall not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operations carried on beyond the external frontiers of such possessions by Her Majesty's forces charged upon such revenues."

We do not admit that the Thibetan mission, which is described in the Speech as a political mission, is a military operation. That matter has been thoroughly considered by the Government of India, and they are satisfied that there has been no contravention of the Act. So far as the people of Thibet are concerned, Colonel Younghusband seems to have been received in a very friendly manner. The opposition he has to encounter is, we believe, entirely confined to the monks at Lhasa, who constitute the civil and religious authority in that strange country.

Then the noble Earl passed to events in South Africa, and expressed his surprise that no information was forthcoming in the King's Speech with regard to the progress of settlement in that country, the number of troops employed there, the state of the finances, and last, but not least, the question of Chinese labour. I really think that a Speech from the Throne including subjects of this kind would be an extremely unusual document. So far as the general position of affairs in South Africa is concerned, I hope the noble Earl will be content to let us discuss that question on some more suitable occasion. But I do feel called upon to say a few words in reply to his observations as to the question of the employment of Chinese labour. The noble Earl said that in a self-governing colony he did not believe that the kind of action we were about to encourage or permit would be tolerated.

*EARL SPENCER: Oh, no. I said that whatever is done in self-governing colonies, however much we might criticise the importation of Chinese labour, we should not interfere.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: Of course this is not a self-governing colony; but it has been the desire of His Majesty's Government to deal with this question as nearly as possible as if we were dealing with a self-governing colony. That is the gist of our policy, and I think I am justified in pointing to the manner in which this proposal to introduce Asiatic labour has been supported in the Transvaal and in South Africa generally. I find that at the Bloemfontein Conference last year—a Conference at which all the South African Colonies were represented—a resolution was carried in favour of the introduction of Asiatic unskilled labour under proper Government control and on the understanding that the labourers should be repatriated at the expiration of their period of service. Then I find that the Labour Commission reported by a majority of ten to two in favour of that step. Then comes the action of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal, which decided in favour of the introduction of Asiatic labour by a majority of twenty-two to four. Finally, I find that a petition has been signed by more than half the male population of the Transvaal in favour of the introduction of Asiatic labour. Dealing as we were with a colony without self-governing institutions, we could not possibly have a greater weight of local authority in support of the proposed measure. I am afraid that the figure of 100,000 which the noble Earl gave us is not one founded upon fact. I believe that what is proposed is that 10,000 of these labourers shall be introduced as an experiment. Lastly, I have to say that the noble Earl is quite correct in stating that the Colonial Secretary has announced that nothing will be finally settled on this point until opportunity has been offered for a full discussion in Parliament. My noble friend the Under-Secretary for the Colonies reminds me that the Papers will be presented as soon as possible.

Now I should like to say a few words on a question which I need not tell your Lordships has aroused a deep interest in the country and has probably a deeper interest for me than for any other Member of your Lordships' House—I mean the Report of Lord Elgin's Commission. That report—the great value of which I am fully prepared to admit—may be used either for one or both of two purposes. You may endeavour to find in it the materials for an indictment of the Government which was in power when the South African war broke out. If you desire to use it for that purpose we are quite ready to meet you. The noble Earl admitted that the report was by no means a condemnation of the then Government at all points. If we are to deal with the report as an indictment of the Government of 1899, we shall ask you to confine yourselves to the terms of that report and to bear in mind, as the noble Earl has admitted, that the report is by no means one which entirely condemns us. I think I shall be able to show that on some points upon which we were most severely criticised at the time, the Commission have reported in our favour. I hope I did not correctly understand what was said by the noble Earl when he told us, as I thought, that he proposed to turn from the report to the *obiter dicta* of the witnesses. There is an immense amount of evidence published with the report, but I think we have a right to ask that the noble Earl should accept the finding of the Commission, and not try to qualify that finding by citations from the opinions of the witnesses who were examined by the Commission. But this historical and personal aspect of the case, interesting as it may be, painfully interesting as it may be to some of us, is not after all the most important aspect of the report. Its great value is this—that it teaches us, upon authority, the lessons to be learned from the South African war, and, as to that, I hope your Lordships will consider that we have at any rate not been slow to take advantage of the suggestions and advice which are given to us by the Commissioners. Your Lordships have already seen the report of that smaller Committee which was appointed to advise the Secretary of State as to the manner in which effect might be given to some of the Commission's recommendations; and I shall be surprised if any Member of this House is found to say that the report of Lord Esher's Committee is wanting in thoroughness or courage. We intend to act upon it so far as its main principles are concerned; and when the time comes for discussing these questions in your Lordships' House you will have before you the facts as disclosed by the report of the Elgin Commission and a clear and distinct statement of the manner in which we propose to deal with the most important subject dealt with in that inquiry—I mean the organisation of the War Office itself.

The noble Earl, at the close of his speech, addressed your Lordships upon that fiscal question which now looms so much in the foreground of our political life. I have no doubt we shall be given frequent opportunity of discussing it, and I therefore treat the noble Earl's observations as more in the nature of a reconnaissance in force than of a frontal attack. But he made one or two observations as to which I should like to say a word. I observe that, following a course which is not very unusual on the part of his friends, he attacked us, not for any policy which we have ourselves put forward, or to which we are in any way committed, but for the policy which has been put forward and recommended to the country by the late Colonial Secretary. I did not catch, in the course of the noble Earl's speech, any serious complaint of the policy which has been laid before the country by the Prime Minister, except that he did not think the Prime Minister had sufficiently defined it; he asked us whether we could tell him what that policy really was. I must say that I thought Mr. Balfour, in the document which he published, and in the speech which he delivered at Sheffield, followed later by a speech which he delivered at Manchester, had very successfully and completely defined the policy which we as a Government have accepted. It is the policy which is usually, for convenience sake, described as the policy of negotiation and retaliation. I have never heard that noble Lords opposite seriously contend that freedom of negotiation is not a freedom which we should be allowed to enjoy; and, as for retaliation, in all the speeches delivered by noble Lords opposite and their friends, I notice that there is always a saving clause about retaliation, and I also notice that that saving clause is always received by the audience with apparently much more enthusiasm than the other parts of their speeches.

The gist of the attack is that we do not conceal our sympathy with the objects which Mr. Chamberlain has proclaimed. I am here to say that I for one certainly do not wish to conceal my sympathy with Mr. Chamberlain's aspirations and objects. The aim of his policy is to draw the different parts of the Empire more closely together, to put the affairs of the Empire, if I may so say, upon a more business footing than has hitherto been the case. Is that an object which any patriotic Englishman can regard with disapproval or indifference? I certainly was under the impression that all of us, for years past, have been seeking to find some way of drawing the colonies nearer to us; and surely the present moment, when the colonies, as is shown in the Speech from the Throne, are, on their side, ready to assume a larger proportion of the burden of Imperial defence, when they are ready to give our commerce facilities which are denied to other countries, is not the moment when we can afford to say that we will exclude altogether from discussion proposals of this kind. We admit—we have never concealed—that proposals of this kind require the most careful examination. We recognise the immense difficulties which have to be overcome before a practical shape can be given to them—difficulties which are not only of an economical, but of a political kind. And, as I have once or twice ventured to say in this House, I am not sure that the political difficulties are not more serious than the economical.

Well, in these circumstances, having explained with absolute clearness the limits of the policy which we are prepared to adopt and to recommend to the country, we say that the question of an extension of that policy of the kind proposed by Mr. Chamberlain is one with which we are not prepared to deal at the present time. Is that a very ignominious position to take up? The question is one of enormous gravity. If the reward of success in dealing with it might be great, the consequences of failure might be irreparable; and I venture to say that we are only showing common prudence when we decline to be rushed into a decision. You are always complaining of us because you suppose that we have sprung this question upon you and endeavoured to rush you into a decision. Then why is it that you wish to rush us into a negative of all these proposals? If you desire time to look about you, are we unreasonable in asking for a little time for the same purpose? Our position seems to me perfectly logical, and, in the meantime, we are fully prepared to defend the policy which we have accepted; and we shall not be very much moved by the ingenious criticism which goes to show that amongst the members of the Cabinet, or the members of the Government, there may be various shades and gradations of opinion—that some of us are more sanguine and that others are less sanguine with regard to the future—so long as we present a solid front in regard to that part of the policy which we have examined and to which, as a Government, we are committed. I have endeavoured to deal with most of the points which the noble Earl has raised. I am afraid that if I had made it my business to follow him in detail on all of them I should have kept your Lordships to a late hour. It only remains for me to thank your Lordships for the patience with which you have listened to me. I have, during my long period of service in this House, constantly had to take advantage of your Lordships' forbearance and generosity, and I trust that in the new position in which I have been unexpectedly placed by the events of the last few months I may look forward to the same patience and the same kindness which your Lordships have never failed to extend to me in past years.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, I had not intended to intervene, but there is one topic on which I wish to say a word. I refer to the great loss which this House has sustained in the death of the late Lord Salisbury. I, who enjoyed for many years his personal friendship, feel it is impossible to remain silent and not to associate myself with what has been said by the seconder of the Address, by the noble Marquess, and by the noble Earl the Leader of the Opposition. I would associate myself with those observations which have been made, and I feel that in saying anything about him in this House it is an idle thing to attempt to say anything of one with whom your Lordships were so familiar. He has too often exhibited the phenomena of "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn" in this House to render any words from those who appreciated his friendship and admired his genius necessary to enhance the admiration with which we all regarded him. He is a loss, I was going to say, not only to his own country, but to Europe; and I think even that would be less than the truth, because it will be true to say that the whole civilised world must miss one who was a great leader of men and of men's thoughts, and one to whose judgment and sagacity from time to time men of all countries and all races have appealed. But of him, as of some other statesmen, I think it is true to say that the extent of his loss the world does not always understand. His colleagues know better how great that loss is, because they know how much has been saved from time to time by the wisdom and sagacity with which affairs have been conducted. And it is the very fact of success that has sometimes buried in oblivion things which might have led to calamities which his wisdom and sagacity have avoided. The very fact of what he has done has buried in oblivion those things which might have led to war; and I can say most truly, that, in my view, on more than one occasion, his patience and forbearance, his tact and courage, have saved his country from what might have been a calamitous war. I will not trust myself to speak of him as a friend and colleague. No one, I believe, who ever came within the sphere of his influence has failed implicity to trust him, and no man ever trusted him in vain.

I will not be provoked into reference to the other matters which the noble Earl the Leader of the Opposition has brought before us. I could not help feeling while I was listening to him that his speech ought logically to have been followed by an Amendment to the Address, and in that case it would have been possible for your Lordships to have expressed an opinion one way or the other. But vague, general declamation against the existing Government, not followed by anything which can give power to your Lordships to express an opinion one way or the other, is not a form of discussion which I think is favourable to those who have an answer to give. I have no doubt that on many occasions we shall have an opportunity of discussing all these topics, and then I shall give myself the satisfaction of occasionally replying to some of the observations which I feel to be unjust, but which this is not the appropriate occasion to discuss.

On Question, agreed to *nemine dissentiente,* and ordered to be presented to His Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

The Earl of Morley—Appointed, *nemine dissentiente,* to take the Chair in all Committees of this House for this session.

Committee for Privileges—Appointed.

Committee for the Journals—Appointed.

Stoppages in the Streets—Order to prevent, renewed.

Appeal Committee—Appointed.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the following Papers having been commanded to be presented to this House by His Majesty had been so presented on the following dates by delivery to the Clerk of the Parliaments, pursuant to Standing Order No. CXI., viz.—

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS (IRELAND).

I. Abstracts showing acreage under crops and the number of live stock in each county and province, 1902-1903. (August 15).

II. (Migratory Labourers). Report and Tables relating to Irish migratory agricultural and other labourers for the year 1903. (November 4).

III. Table showing the extent in statute acres, and the produce of crops for the year 1903. (December 30).

WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the military preparations and other matters connected with the war in South Africa; with Minutes of Evidence (Vols. I. and II.) and Appendices. (September 10).

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

I. Return for the month of May, 1903. (August 19.)

II. Return for the month of June, 1903. (September 28.)

III. Return for the month of July, 1903. (October 14.)

IV. Return for the month of August, 1903. (October 29.)

V. Return for the month of September, 1903. (November 24.)

VI. Return for the month of October, 1903. (December 19.)

TRADE REPORTS.—I. ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3066. China (Amoy.)

No. 3067. Portugal (Lorenço Marques). (August 21.)

No. 3068. Germany (Dantzig).

No. 3069. France (French Guinea).

No. 3070. Italy (South Italy, Supplementary). (August 27.)

No. 3071. France (Algeria). (August 29.)

No. 3072. Russia (Riga). (September 1.)

No. 3073. Austria-Hungary.

No. 3074. Greece (Ionian Islands). (August 29.)

No. 3075. Austria-Hungary (Bohemia). (September 2.)

No. 3076. Cuba.

No. 3077. Costa Rica.

No. 3078. Netherlands (Dutch Guiana). (September 5.)

No. 3079. Peru.

No. 3080. Italy (Sicily).

No. 3081. China (Wuhu). (September 10.)

No. 3082. Austria-Hungary (Fiume).

No. 3083. Netherlands (Finances of the Netherlands, 1902–3). (September 25.)

No. 3084. Japan (Nagasaki). (September 15.)

No. 3085. Germany.

No. 3086. Finland. (September 19.)

No. 3087. France (Madagascar).

No. 3088. Spain (Canary Islands). (September 22.)

No. 3089. France (Senegal and Dependencies).

No. 3090. Italy (Lombardy). (September 24.)

No. 3091. Hayti.

No. 3092. China. (October 5.)

No. 3093. Morocco (Dar-al-Baida and District). (October 10.)

No. 3094. Austria-Hungary (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

No. 3095. Italy (Ancona). (October 13.)

No. 3096. Borneo (Brunei, Sarawak, and British North Borneo). (October 15.)

No. 3097. Turkey (Crete).

No. 3098. United States (Charleston and District). (October 16.)

No. 3099. Siam (Bangkok).

No. 3100. Turkey (Salonica).

No. 3101. France. (October 21.)

No. 3102. Russia (Reval). (October 27.)

No. 3103. Morocco (Tangier and District). (October 28.)

No. 3104. Belgium. (November 7).

No. 3105. Russia (Archangel). (November 18.)

No. 3106. France (French Guiana).

No. 3107. Brazil (Pará).

No. 3108. Russia (Trans-Caucasus).

No. 3109. Persia (Resht). (December 3.)

No. 3110. Italy (Sardinia). (December 22.)

No. 3111. Switzerland. (December 30.)

No. 3112. Mexico.

No. 3113. Denmark. (January 30.)

No. 3114. Columbia (excepting the Panama District).

No. 3115. Russia (Consular District of Rostox-on-Don). (February 1.)

II. MISCELLANEOUS SERIES.

No. 596. Instruction in forestry and forest economy in Germany. (September 15.)

No. 597. Germany (instruction in mining and metallurgy in Germany and the German mining and metallurgical industries). (October 9.)

No. 598. Coffee trade in Colombia. (November 3.)

No. 599. Germany (beer brewing industry of Bavaria). (November 12.)

No. 600. Technical instruction in Germany. (The building and engineering trades' schools). (November 12.)

No. 601. Technical instruction in Germany. (Special schools and courses for mechanical engineering and electrotechnics). (January 2.)

AFRICA.

No 11. (1903). Reports on the geology of the East Africa Protectorate by the late E. E. Walker (Government Geologist). (August 22.)

No. 12. (1903). Report by the Mombasa-Victoria Railway Committee on the progress of the works and revenue working, 1902–1903 (with two maps). (August 22.)

No. 13. (1903). Report on the trade and general conditions of the British Central Africa Protectorate for the year 1902–1903, by Major F. B. Pearce, Acting Commissioner. (September 10.)

No. 14 (1903). Despatch to certain of His Majesty's Representatives abroad in regard to alleged cases of ill-treatment of natives, and to the existence of trade monopolies in the Independent State of the Congo. (October 21.)

No. 15. (1903.) General Report on the Uganda Protectorate, for the year ended 31st March, 1903. (December 19.)

COLONIES (ANNUAL).

No. 395. Seychelles (Report for 1902). (August 29.)

No. 396. Ceylon (Report for 1902). (September 28.)

No. 397. Gold Coast (Report for 1902). (September 30.)

No. 398. Barbados (Report for 1902–1903). (October 8.)

No. 399. Fiji (Report for 1902). (October 10.)

No. 400. Lagos (Report for 1902). (October 15.)

No. 401. British Solomon Islands (Report for 1902–1903).

No. 402. Cocos-Keeling Islands (Report for 1903). (October 21.)

No. 403. St. Vincent (Report for 1902–1903). (October 28.)

No. 404. Grenada (Report for 1902). (November 25.)

No. 405. Southern Nigeria (Report for 1902). (November 26.)

No. 406. Straits Settlements (Report for 1902). (November 27.)

No. 407. Trinidad and Tobago (Report for 1902–1903). (November 28.)

No. 408. Basutoland (Report for 1902–1903). (December 3.)

No. 409. Northern Nigeria (Report for 1902). (December 4.)

No. 410. Malta (Report for 1902–1903). (December 10.)

No 411. St. Lucia (Report for 1902). (December 16.)

No. 412. Mauritius (Report for 1902). (December 29.)

No. 413. British Guiana (Report for 1902–1903). (January 2.)

MISCELLANOUS.

No. 22. Seychelles (Report on Para rubber). (September 15.)

No. 23. Dominica (Roads and Land Settlement. Report on the expenditure of the Parliamentary Grant-in-Aid). (September 22.)

No. 24. Grenada (Report on Land Settlement in Carriacou). (November 24.)

No. 25. Hong-Kong (Bubonic Plague: Memorandum on the treatment of patients in their own homes and in local hospitals). (December 8.)

CANADA.

Canadian Sessional Paper containing correspondence in connection with German tariff. (August 29.)

HIGHWAYS (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).

I. Part I.—Report of.

II. Part II. — Minutes of evidence taken before the Committee appointed by the President of the Local Government Board to inquire into the subject of highway authorities and administration in England and Wales; together with appendix and index of evidence. (August 29.)

MINES AND QUARRIES (GENERAL REPORT AND STATISTICS FOR 1902).

I. Part II. Labour.—General Report and Statistics relating to persons employed and accidents at mines and quarries in the United Kingdom and to the enforcement of the Mines and Quarries Act. (September 1.)

II. Part III. Output. — General Report and Statistics relating to the output and value of minerals raised in the United Kingdom, the amount and value of the metals produced, and the imports and exports of minerals. (October 17.)

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE (INDIAN SECTION.)

Annual Report for the year 1902–1903. (September 4.)

STATISTICS (FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Statistical Abstract for the principal and other foreign countries in each year from 1891 to 1900–1901 (as far as the particulars can be stated), 29th Number. (September 4.)

TREATY SERIES.

No. 12. (1903.)—Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting commercial relations between France and Jamaica; signed at London, 8th August, 1902. (Ratifications exchanged at London, 12th August, 1903.) (September 10.)

No. 13. (1903.)—Accession of Mexico to the Industrial Property Convention, 1883, and Additional Act of 1900. (September 7.)

No. 14. (1903.)—Accession of Germany to the Industrial Property Convention of 20th March, 1883, &c., 1st May, 1903. (September 25.)

No. 15. (1903.)—Parcel Post Convention with detailed regulations between the United Kingdom and Chile; signed at Santiago, 21st October, 1902. (October 7.)

No. 16. (1903.)—Protocol for submitting to arbitration certain questions as to the interpretation of treaties with Japan with regard to leases held in perpetuity; signed at Tokio, 28th August, 1902. (October 23.)

No. 17. (1903.)—Treaty between the United Kingdom and China respecting commercial relations, etc.; signed at Shanghai, 5th September, 1902. (Ratifications exchanged at Peking, 28th July, 1903.) (November 3.)

No. 18. (1903.)—Agreement between the United Kingdom and France providing for the settlement by arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the two Governments; signed at London, 14th October, 1903. (November 26.)

No. 1. (1904.)—Convention for the establishment of a parcel post service between the United States and Hong-Kong; signed at Washington, 21st November, 1903. (January 19.)

CENSUS (SCOTLAND), 1901.

Eleventh Decennial Census of the Population of Scotland taken 31st March, 1901, with Report (Vol. III). (September 15.)

CENSUS (ENGLAND AND WALES), 1901.

Index to Population Tables for England and Wales in the County Volumes of the Census Report, 1901. (October 23.)

WEST INDIES.

Further correspondence relating to the volcanic eruptions in St. Vincent and Martinique in 1902 and 1903. (September 19.)

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS.

I. (Ireland). Forty-first Report of the Inspector for the year ended 31st December, 1902. (September 21.)

II. (Great Britain). Forty-sixth Report, for the year 1902, of the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools. Part II. General Report and Appendices III. to XI. (October 23.)

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Report of the Commissioners of Prisons and the Directors of Convict Prisons, with Appendices, for the year ended 31st March, 1903. (September 22.)

INDIA (STATISTICAL ABSTRACT).

Statistical Abstract relating to British India, from 1892–1893 to 1901–1902, 37th Number. (September 23.)

INDIA.

Review of India in 1902–1903. (September 24.)

BANKING, RAILWAY, AND SHIPPING STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Report for June, 1903. (September 28.)

COLONIAL IMPORT DUTIES, 1903.

Return relating to the rates of import duties levied upon the principal and other articles imported into the Colonial and other Possessions of the United Kingdom. (October 9.)

COMMERCIAL.

No. 8 (1903).—Reports from certain of His Majesty's Representatives abroad respecting Forestry Laws. (October 9.)

No. 9. (1903).—Return of Most-Favoured-Nation Clauses in existing Treaties of Commerce and Navigation between Great Britain and Foreign Powers, stating the period when terminable, and showing whether they apply to the British Colonies; in force on 1st July, 1903. (October 20.)

BOARD OF MANUFACTURES (SCOTLAND).

Report of Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the administration of the Board of Manufactures. (October 10.)

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE LAW (COLONIES).

Papers relating to laws of marriage and divorce in self-governing British Colonies. (October 10.)

CYPRUS.

Despatch from the High Commissioners covering a Report on the agricultural fund, for the year ended 31st March, 1903. (October 10.)

POLICE (METROPOLIS).

Report of the Commissioner of Police of Metropolis, for the year 1902. (October 12.)

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP.

Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops, for the year ended, 1902. Part II., Tables. (October 16.)

TURKEY.

No. 4. (1903.) Further correspondence respecting affairs of South - Eastern Europe. (October 16.)

No. 1. (1904.) Further correspondence respecting affairs of South-Eastern Europe. March to September, 1903. (January 11.)

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND).

I. Return for the quarter ended 30th September, 1903. (October 17.)

II. Return for the quarter ended 31st December, 1903. (January 21.)

ARMY (MILITARY PRISONS).

Report for the year 1902. (October 19.)

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1903.

Tables showing the populations of counties, local government districts, and burghs in Scotland with reference to the provisions of the Act. (October 21.)

INEBRIATES ACTS (INSPECTOR'S REPORT).

Report of Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879–1900, for the year 1902. (October 21.)

PETERHEAD HARBOUR.

Reports respecting Peterhead Harbour Works (in continuation of [Cd. 1288]). (October 22.)

NAVAL MANŒUVRES.

Report of Naval Manœuvres of 1903, carried out by combined Mediterranean, Home and Channel Fleets, and the Cruiser Squadron, from the 5th to the 11th August, 1903. (October 22.)

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Report on the Manuscripts of:—

I. The Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, K.G., K.T., preserved at Drumlanrig Castle. Vol. II. (October 23.)

II. Mrs. Stopford-Sackville, of Drayton House, Northamptonshire. Vol. I. (January 16.)

ARMY.

I. (Volunteer Corps). Annual Return of the Volunteer Corps of Great Britain, for the year 1902. (October 23.)

II. List of exceptions to the Army Regulations as to pay, non-effective pay, and allowances sanctioned by the Commissioners of the Treasury, pursuant to the Royal Warrant, dated 27th October, 1884, during the year 1902–1903. (November 17.)

III. (Recuiting) Annual Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting, for the first nine months of the year 1903. (January 19.)

IV. Return of rifle ranges in the United Kingdom. (January 21.)

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (EVICTION NOTICES).

I. Return of the number of eviction notices filed during the quarter ended 30th September, 1903. (October 23.)

II. Return of the number of eviction notices filed during the quarter ended 31st December, 1903. (January 26.)

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Return of Evictions in Ireland—

I. For the quarter ended 30th September, 1903. (October 30.)

II. For the quarter ended 31st December, 1903. (January 29th.)

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1869.

Report on the Judicial Statistics of Scotland, for the year 1902. (October 27.)

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

Reports on the Federated Malay States for 1902. (October 28.)

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

Preliminary Conference at Berlin on wireless telegraphy; Procés-Verbaux and Protocole Final. (October 30.)

EDUCATION.

I. Regulations relating to the Royal College of Science, the Royal College of Art, and to museums under the Board of Education. (From the 1st August, 1903. to 31st July, 1904.) (November 2.)

II. Special Reports on educational subjects (Report on the school training and early employment of Lancashire children). (December 11.)

III. Statement of schemes for the formation of education committees approved during the period 1st August to 30th November, 1903, by the Board of Education (in continuation of Command Papers, 1564, 1613, 1659, 1675, and 1740). (December 18.)

IV. Reports from University Colleges (1903). (January 9.)

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND).

I. Appendix, Section III., to the Annual Report of the Commissioners, for the year 1902. (November 4.)

II. Appendix, Section II., to the Annual Report of the Commissioners, for the year 1902. (January 4.)

ANKYLOSTOMIASIS.

Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by J. S. Haldane, Esq., M.D., F.R.S., on Ankylostomiasis in Westphalian Collieries. (November 5.)

SOUTH AFRICA (COMMERCIAL MISSION).

Report received from Mr. Henry Birchenough, the Special Commissioner appointed by the Board of Trade to inquire into and report upon the present position and future prospects of British Trade in South Africa. (November 14.)

MISCELLANEOUS.

No. 5. (1903.)—Correspondence showing the systems in force in certain foreign countries for publishing official Reports of proceedings in the Houses of Legislature. (November 14).

No. 6. (1903)—Return as to financial support given from State or municipal funds to dramatic, operative, or musical performances in foreign countries. (December 14.)

CHINA.

No. 3. (1903.)—Report by Acting Consul Litton on a journey in North-West Yunnan. (November) 14).

No 1. (1904.)—Report by Mr. C. W. Campbell, His Majesty's Consul at Wuchow, on a journey in Mongolia (with a map). (January 6.)

ARSENICAL POISONING (ROYAL COMMISSION).

I. Report of Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of arsenical poisoning arising from the consumption of beer and other articles of food or drink. Part II. being Vol. I. of Minutes of Evidence and Appendices. (November 16.)

II. Final Report of Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of arsenical poisoning arising from the consumption of beer and other articles of food and drink.

Part I. Report. (November 24.)

Part II. Being Vol. II. of Minutes of Evidence and Appendices (December 12.)

BOARD OF TRADE (CONCILIATION).

Fourth Report by the Board of Trade of Proceedings under the Conciliation (Trade Disputes) Act, 1896, 1901–1903. (November 16.)

EXPLOSIVES (EXPLOSIONS AT THE COTTON POWDER COMPANY'S FACTORY AT FAVERSHAM).

Reports to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the circumstances attending explosions of nitro-glycerine, which occurred in the final washing house of the factory of the Cotton Powder Company, Limited, at Uplees Marshes, Faversham, Kent—

I. By Major A. Cooper-Key on the explosion of 23rd August, 1903. (November 19.)

II. By Captain J. H. Thomson on the explosion of 9th November, 1903. (January 20.)

INDIA.

I. Irrigation—Report of the Indian Irrigation Commission, 1901–1903—

Part I. General.
Part II. Provincial.
Part III. Maps.
Part IV. Appendix. (November 30.)

II. Sanitary Measures.—Report on sanitary measures in India in 1901–1902. Vol. XXXV. (November 25.)

III. Trade.—Tables relating to the Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries, 1898–1899 to 1902–3. (January 28.)

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners and confirmed by the Board of Trade.

a. Authorising construction of Light Railways in,

I. The City of Bath in the county of Somerset (being extensions and deviations of the existing and authorised undertaking of Bath Electric Tramways, Limited), and the abandonment of construction of certain other light railways already authorised in the same city.

II. The rural district of Dartford in the county of Kent.

III. The county of Kent from the River Thames near Greenhithe to Dartford and Eynsford, with branches to Swanley Junction and to Stansted.

IV. The borough of Burton-upon-Trent, the urban districts of Swadlincote and of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and the rural districts of Repton and Hartshorne and Seals of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, in the counties of Stafford, Derby, and Leicester.

V. The borough and rural district of Dover and parish of River in the County of Kent.

VI. The county of Southampton from Totton and Fawley.

VII. The county of Gloucester, in the parishes of Henbury and Shirehampton.

(*b.*) Amending—

I. The Bere Alston and Calstock Light Railway Order, 1900.

II. The Llandudno and Colwyn Bay Light Railway Order, 1898.

III. The Lastingham and Rosedale Light Railway Order, 1900.

(*c.*) Reviving powers granted and extending period limited by Bankfort Light Railway Order, 1898, for compulsory purchase of lands, and extending period limited by that Order for the completion of the railway and works by that Order authorised.

(*d.*) Transferring to the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of the borough of Nelson the powers conferred upon the Barrowford Urban District Council by Barrowford Light Railway Order, 1901, and amending that Order and the Nelson Light Railways Order, 1901. (December 7.)

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.

Report on the results of investigations into cider-making carried out on behalf of the Bath and West and Southern Counties Society in the years 1893–1902, by F. J. Lloyd, F.C.S., F.I.C. (December 11.)

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, GALWAY.

Annual Report of President for Session 1902–1903. (December 18.)

METEOROLOGICAL COUNCIL.

Report of the Meteorological Council for the year ended 31st March, 1903, to the President and Council of the Royal Society. (January 1.)

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Appendix to Annual Report of Commissioners for the year 1902—

I. Section II. (January 4.)

II. Section I. (January 15.)

SEWAGE DISPOSAL (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Fourth Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire and report what methods of treating and disposing of sewage may properly be adopted, together with Vol. II. Minutes of Evidence; Vol. III. Reports on Bacteriological Investigations; and Vol. IV. Reports on the Land. Treatment of sewage and methods of chemical analysis of sewage effluents. (January 5.)

CHAPTER HOUSE (WESTMINSTER).

Memoranda by Professor Church, F.R.S., concerning treatment of decayed stonework in the Chapter House, Westminster Abbey. (January 8.)

POSTAL CONVENTION (DENMARK).

Agreement between Post Office of United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and Post Office of Denmark. (January 9.)

RAILWAYS (CONTINUOUS BRAKES).

Return by railway companies of the United Kingdom for six months, ending 30th June, 1903. (January 16.)

PATRIOTIC FUND.

Forty-second Report of Royal Commissioners. (January 21.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND).

Report on shellfish layings on the Irish coast as respects their liability to sewage contamination. (January 21.)

ELECTRICITY IN MINES.

Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for Home Department to inquire into the use of electricity in mines, with minutes of evidence and appendices. (January 30.)

TRANSVAAL.

Report of Transvaal Labour Commission. (January 29.)

UNITED STATES, No. 1 (1904).

Correspondence respecting the Alaska Boundary. (February 1.)

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND).

Third Annual Report, 1902–1903. (February 1.)

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3116. Belgium.

No. 3117. France (Indo-China).

UNITED STATES, No. 2 (1904).

Map to accompany correspondence respecting the Alaska Boundary (United States, No. 1 (1904).

TURKEY, No. 2 (1904).

Further correspondence respecting the affairs of South-Eastern Europe (in continuation of Turkey, No. 1 (1904)).

SOUTH AFRICA.

Further correspondence relating to the affairs of the Tranvaal and Orange River Colony.

EXPLOSIVES (EXPLOSION AT THE BLENHEIM ENGINEERING COMPANY'S FACTORY AT TUNNEL LANE, GREENWICH MARSHES).

Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Major A. Cooper-Key, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, on the circumstances attending an explosion of fulminate composition at the factory of the Blenheim Engineering Company, Limited, at Tunnel Lane, Greenwich Marshes, on 18th December, 1903.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LUNACY.

1. Return of all sums received by the visitors of lunatics for travelling expenses, or upon any other account, from the 1st January to the 31st December, 1903.

2. Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, the number of patients seen, and the number of miles travelled by the visitors of lunatics pursuant to the Lunacy Act, 1890, between 1st April, 1903, to 30th September, 1903.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE .

Rules.

BARBADOS.

Prison rule relating to the vaccination of prisoners.

INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT ACTS, 1844 TO 1866.

Order in Council of the 9th October, 1903, giving effect to the accession of Denmark to the International Copyright Convention of the 9th September, 1886, and Additional Act of Paris, 1897.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT, 1878.

Order in Council of the 9th October, 1903, approving a new denomination of standard weight of fifty pounds or "half-cental."

GREENWICH HOSPITAL ACTS.

Order in Council of the 9th October, 1903, sanctioning certain pensions now granted from the funds of Greenwich Hospital being supplemented from Naval Funds.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Orders in Council of the 9th October, 1903, applying the provisions of Section 238 of the Act in the case of deserters from Japanese vessels.

Orders in Council of the 16th November, 1903, confirming byelaws made by the pilotage authority for the ports of Gloucester and Burntisland respectively.

Two Orders in Council of the 29th January, 1904, providing for the remeasurement for tonnage of French and Spanish vessels in British ports.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.

Order in Council of the 8th December, 1903, entitled "The Zanzibar Order in Council, 1903."

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1858.

Order in Council of the 8th December, 1903, approving a statement of proposed new and revised appointments and alterations of salaries in the establishment of the Secretary of State in Council of India.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Additional rules made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland as to—

I. Experimental science and drawing.

II. Experimental and practical science.

Amended rules made by the Board for the examination in music.

Time-table of examinations for the year 1904.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) ACT.

Orders in Council, dated 1st December, 1903, and 21st January, 1904, giving effect to Rules of Court.

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) ACT, 1899.

Thirty-three Minutes by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, sanctioning forms of instruction for certain county boroughs, counties, and urban districts.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853 TO 1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCES).

Licences granted by His Majesty under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864.

I. To Ellis Smith.
II. To Patrick Hardigan.

Licence granted by His Majesty to Mary Ann Phillips, a convict under detention in Aylesbury Prison, permitting her to be at large on condition that she enter the Home of the Holy Rood at Worthing.

Licence granted to Timothy W. Nolan, a convict, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A. of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864.

PHARMACY (IRELAND) ACTS, 1875 AND 1890.

Order in Council, dated 9th October, 1903, approving of a regulation made by the Pharmaceutical Society.

MILITIA ACT, 1882 (DEPUTY LIEUTENANTS).

Returns of descriptions of qualifications of deputy lieutenants lodged during 1902, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

WINTER ASSIZES (IRELAND).

Order, dated 9th October, 1903, and three Orders, dated 4th November, 1903, for holding Winter Assizes in Ireland.

PUBLIC RECORDS.

(Colonial Office). Schedule containing a list and particulars of classes of documents existing or accruing in the office of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State having the Department of the Colonies which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office

Additional rule made by the right hon. Sir Richard Henn Collins, Master of the Rolls, for the disposal of certain documents.

CERTIFIED INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES (REGULATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT).

Regulations made with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Home Department for the management and discipline of the certified inebriate reformatory at Ackworth, Yorkshire.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS.

(Incorporation of Aston Manor).—Charter of incorporation of the borough of Aston Manor, dated 17th August, 1903.

(Incorporation of Hornsey).—Charter of incorporation of the borough of Hornsey, dated 17th August, 1903.

(Incorporation of Gillingham).—Charter of incorporation of the borough of Gillingham, dated 17th August, 1903.

(Incorporation of Bromley).—Charter of incorporation of the borough of Bromley, dated 17th August, 1903.

INEBRIATES ACTS, 1879 TO 1899 (REGULATIONS FOR STATE INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES).

New regulations, dated 29th December, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, prescribing the diet for ill-conducted or idle inmates of State Reformatories, and revoking Regulation 64 (*b*) and 66 (*b*), and so much of Appendix A. as relates to the diet of ill-conducted or idle inmates of the Regulation dated 21st June, 1901.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP.

(Special Exceptions: Creameries).—Order, dated 23rd October, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 42 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, granting certain special exceptions to creameries, and revoking the Order (Ireland) dated 9th June, 1902.

(Special Exception: Lime-washing, &c.).—Order, dated 2nd November, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 1 (4) of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, granting special exceptions from the provisions respecting lime-washing, &c., to certain factories and parts of factories, and revoking the Orders, dated 16th November, 1895, 8th February, 1896, and 26th March, 1902.

Dangerous and Unhealthy Industries.—Regulations, dated 21st November, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 79 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, for the manufacture of electric accumulators.

Particulars of Piecework Wages: Wearing Apparel).—Order, dated 17th December, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying with modifications the provisions of Section 116 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to the manufacture of wearing apparel, and revoking the Order dated 22nd April, 1897.

(Special Exception: Overtime).—Order, dated 29th December, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 49 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, with regard to the overtime employment of women on not more than thirty days in the year, and revoking all existing Orders.

(Health: Bakehouses).—Order, dated 30th December, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 3, Subsection 2, of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, modifying the proportion of cubic feet of space to be provided in certain bakehouses.

(Earthernware and China).—Amended special rules for the manufacture and decoration of earthenware and china as established by the awards of the umpire, Lord James of Hereford, dated 30th December, 1901, and 28th November, 1903.

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Return of the amount of notes issued more than forty years, and outstanding on 28th October, 1903, which have been written off.

IMPERIAL OTTOMAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1855.

Account for the year to 31st December, 1903.

TREASURY BILLS.

Treasury Minute, dated 24th January, 1904, amending the regulation laid down in the Treasury Minute of 31st May, 1889, relating to tenders for Treasury Bills, under the Act 40 Victoria, chap. 2, s. 9.

ST. LOUIS EXHIBITION COMMISSION, 1904.

Treasury Minute, dated 29th August, 1903, directing that the accounts of the Royal Commission for the St. Louis Exhibition for 1904 shall be examined and audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General.

SUPERANNUATION.

Professional qualifications. Treasury Minutes declaring that professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired on the public service are required for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the offices of—

I. Secretary to the Civil Service Commissioners (10th November, 1903).

II. Deputy Governor of a convict prison in Ireland (21st November, 1903).

Treasury Minute, dated 20th August, 1903, awarding a special pension to Sir Kenelm Edward Digby, K.C.B., late Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department.

Treasury Minutes declaring that the following persons were appointed without Civil Service certificates through inadvertence on the part of the heads of their Departments—

I. Thomas Ashbrook Forster, Postmaster, Newtown Post Office (30th September, 1903).

II. Alfred Wellham, machine-hand, Royal Small Arms Factory, Birmingham (5th November, 1903).

III. William Edward Bird, engine driver, Royal Gun Factory, War Department (23rd December, 1903).

IV. Charles Chamberlain, principal foreman, Royal Carriage Department, War Office (2nd October, 1903).

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Edinburgh to the Secretary for Scotland, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Act for the year 1902–1903.

Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of Edinburgh, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Act.

Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Glasgow to the Secretary for Scotland, under the provision of Section 30 of the Act, for the year 1902–1903.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1877, AND SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND ACTS, 1885–1889.

Rule made by the Secretary for Scotland appointing the police cells at Kirkcaldy to be a legal prison for the detention of untried prisoners for a period not exceeding fourteen days before or during trial, and of convicted prisoners for a period not exceeding seven days from the date of conviction.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1903.

Order by the Secretary for Scotland under Section 109.

WEST HIGHLAND RAILWAY (EXTENSION FROM BANAVIE TO MALLAIG).

Second Annual Report by the Board of Trade as to the condition and working of the Banavie to Mallaig Railway, the rates and charges for traffic, and the receipts and expenditure of any company in working the railway, for the year 1902–1903.

INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).

Return of all loans raised in England under the provisions of any Acts of Parliament, chargeable on the revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on the 30th September, 1903, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon, and the date of the termination of each loan, the debt incurred during the half-year, the moneys raised thereby during the half-year, the loans paid off or discharged during the half-year, and the loans outstanding at the close of the half-year, stating, so far as the public convenience will allow, the purpose or service for which moneys have been raised during the half-year.

LOANS RAISED IN INDIA.

Return of all loans raised in India, chargeable on the revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended on the 30th September, 1903, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon, and the date of the termination of each loan, the debt incurred during the half-year, the moneys raised thereby during the half-year, the loans paid off or discharged during the half-year, and the loans outstanding at the close of the half-year, stating, so far as the public convenience will allow, the purpose or service for which moneys have been raised during the half-year.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877.

Statutes made by the Governing Bodies of :

Magdalene College, Cambridge, on the 22nd June, 1903, in substitution for Statute XXV. of the statutes of the college.

Oriel College, Oxford, on the 24th April, 1903, amending Statute IV., 7, of the statutes of the college.

Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, on the 16th March, 1903, in substitution for the existing statutes of the college.

New College, Oxford, on the 17th June, 1903, amending certain clauses of Statute III. of the statutes of the college.

St. John's College, Oxford, on the 15th May, 1903, amending Statute XV., 1, of the statutes of the college.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 1.)

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889, UNIVERSITY COURT ORDINANCE No. IX (EDINBURGH No. 3.)

Regulations for the degree of Bachelor-of-Law (B.L.); laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 2.)

MARGATE PIER AND HARBOUR BOARD.

Report and statement of accounts for year ended 5th April, 1903.

MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR BOARD.

Accounts for year ended 1st July, 1903 ; delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUBSIDIES TO SHIPPING COMPANIES.

Return respecting ; laid before the House (pursuant to Order of the 13th of August last), and to be printed. (No. 3.)

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.

Return of the number of aliens that arrived from the Continent at ports in the United Kingdom, in each month of the year 1904; ordered to be laid before the House.—(*The Lord Wolverton.*)

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.

Return (in part) respecting; laid before the House (pursuant to Order of this day), and to be printed. (No. 6.)

NEW BILLS.

SEA FISHERIES BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to provide against the destruction of undersized flat fish, was presented by the Earl of Onslow; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 4.)

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES (METRIC SYSTEM) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to render compulsory the use of the system of weights and measures, commonly known as the metric system, was presented by the Lord Kelvin; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 5.)

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Eight o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 2nd February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

Message to attend His Majesty.

The House went, and, being returned—

NEW WRITS.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House that he had issued Warrants for New Writs during the recess.

For St. Andrew's District Burghs, in the room of Henry Torrens Anstruther, esquire, who hath accepted the Office of a Representative in the Conseil d'Administration of the Suez Canal Company; City of Rochester, James Hubert Gascoyne Cecil, commonly called Viscount Cranborne, called to the House of Peers; County of Meath (South Division), James Laurence Carew, esquire, deceased; County of Leitrim (Northern Division), Patrick Aloysius M'Hugh, esquire, an adjudicated bankrupt; Borough of Belfast (West Division), Hugh Oakley Arnold-Forster, esquire, who hath accepted the Office of Secretary of State for War; Borough of Warwick and Leamington, the honourable Alfred Lyttelton, K.C., who hath accepted the Office of Secretary of State for the Colonies; South-East Lancashire (Westhoughton Division), George Villiers Stanley, C.B., commonly called Lord Stanley, who hath accepted the Office of Postmaster-General; County of Southampton (Southern or Fareham Division), Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Hamilton Lee, who hath accepted the Office of Civil Lord of the Admiralty; City of Londonderry, James Albert Edward Hamilton, commonly called Marquess of Hamilton, who hath accepted the Office of Treasurer of His Majesty's Household; North Lancashire (Chorley Division), David Alexander Edward Lindsay, commonly called Lord Balcarres, who hath accepted the Office of Junior Lord of the Treasury; Borough of Camberwell (Dulwich Division), Sir John Blundell Maple, baronet, deceased Borough of Lewisham, John Penn esquire, deceased; County of Devon (Mid or Ashburton Division), the Right Honourable Charles Seale-Hayne, deceased; County of Salop (Ludlow Division), Robert Jasper More, esquire, deceased; City of Norwich, Sir Harry Bullard, knight, deceased; Borough of Gateshead, Sir William Allan, knight, deceased; Ayr Boroughs, Charles Lindsay Orr-Ewing, esquire, deceased.

Mr. SPEAKER also informed the House that he had received the following letters:—

> "15, Bishopsgate Street, Within, E.C.,
> "1st February, 1904.
>
> "The Right Honourable
> "The Speaker of the House of Commons.
>
> "Sir,
>
> "I have the honour to inform you that the Firm of Antony Gibbs and Sons, of which I and my brother Vicary Gibbs are members, accepted a contract with the Admiralty on the 2nd December last.
>
> "I am, Sir,
> "Your obedient servant.
> "ALBAN GIBBS."

"1st February, 1904.
"St. Dunstan's,
"Regent's Park

"Mr. Speaker,

"I have the honour to inform you that at the latter end of last year, I (as a partner in the firm of Antony Gibbs and Sons) entered into a contract with the Admiralty, and am advised that by so doing I have, under an Act of George III. vacated my seat in Parliament.

"I beg to remain, Mr. Speaker,
"Your obedient humble servant,
"VICARY GIBBS."

CITY OF LONDON (WRIT).

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) submitted as a matter of constitutional procedure that a new Writ should not issue until a Committee had been appointed to consider and report whether the hon. Member was or was not a contractor within the meaning of the statute. He contended, according to precedents which he cited, viz., the cases of Baron Rothschild in 1845, and of Sir Sydney Waterlow in 1869—in each of which the Speaker of the day suspended the Motion for the Writ until the question had been considered by the Committee—that the question whether a Member had become a contractor with the Crown was one absolutely within the purview of the House, and was not a question for the Member himself.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! It is a matter entirely in the hands of the House to say whether the Writ shall issue. When it is moved for it will be open to the hon. Member to object, that the proper course would be to appoint a Committee, and then the Motion will be discussed on some subsequent day.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somerestshire, Wellington) moved the issue of a new Writ for the City of London.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a New Writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of London, in the room of Alban Gibbs, esquire, who has accepted a contract with the Admiralty."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL submitted that the Writ ought not to be issued on the grounds he had already indicated, and that a Committee should first be appointed to find out whether or not these gentlemen were contractors. In previous cases, when gentlemen had been elected Members of the House and had subsequently discovered that by reason of their being contractors to the Government at the time of their election they were disqualified from sitting, they had been allowed to release themselves by letter to Mr. Speaker, but there was no precedent for following such a course in the present case, and he therefore hoped a Select Committee would be appointed to ascertain whether or not these gentlemen were legally contractors.

MR. SPEAKER said that so far as regarded procedure, the present cases were exactly parallel with those in which gentlemen elected at a General Election had found themselves disqualified by holding Government contracts.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL urged that there was a material difference between those cases and the present one, where the hon. Members took contracts after their election. That brought it absolutely within the purview of the House to decide whether or not they were contractors. It was not in accordance with constitutional usage for an hon. Member to thus declare himself a contractor on his own *ipse dixit*. Further than that, these gentlemen in their public speeches had themselves expressed doubt as to whether they were contractors.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not say it is not in the power of the House to deal with the question. I am only saying that the proceedure followed in this instance was in accordance with previous precedent. Does the hon. Member object to the issue of the Writ?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Yes, Sir, on the ground that the precedent set in the Rothschild and Waterlow cases ought to be followed in this, and that a Committee should be appointed to find out whether these gentlemen are contractors or not.

MR. SPEAKER said that probably the most convenient course would be that debate on the question raised by the hon. Member for South Donegal should be adjourned until to-morrow, the hon. Member meantime putting his Amendment in form.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Very good, Sir.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Swift MacNeill,*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

COUNTY OF HERTFORD (MID OR ST. ALBANS DIVISION) (WRIT).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the election of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the County of Hertford (St. Albans Division) in the room of Vicary Gibbs, esquire, who has accepted a contract with the Admiralty."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*).

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I suppose the same course will be adopted in this case.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, to-morrow.

Debate adjourned till to-morrow.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Right hon. Alfred Lyttelton, for Borough of Warwick and Leamington.

Right hon. Hugh Oakley Arnold-Forster, City of Belfast (West Belfast Division).

Right hon. Edward George Villiers Stanley, C.B. (commonly called Lord Stanley), South-East Lancashire (Westhoughton Division).

David Alexander Edward Lindsay (commonly called Lord Balcarres), North Lancashire (Chorley Division).

Arthur Hamilton Lee, esquire, County of Hants (Southern or Fareham Division).

James Albert Edward Hamilton (commonly called Marquess of Hamilton), City of Londonderry.

Charles Tuff, esquire, City of Rochester.

Edward Feetham Coates, esquire, Borough of Lewisham.

Frederick Rutherford Harris, esquire, Borough of Camberwell (Dulwich Division).

Rowland Hunt, esquire, County of Salop (Southern or Ludlow Division).

John Stirling Ainsworth, esquire, County of Argyll.

Captain Edward Charles Ellice, St. Andrews District of Burghs.

Harry Trelawney Eve, esquire, County of Devon (Mid or Ashburton Division).

Louis John Tillett, esquire, City of Norwich.

Patrick Aloysius M'Hugh, esquire, County of Leitrim (North Leitrim Division).

David Sheehy, esquire, County of Meath (South Meath Division).

ELECTIONS.

Ordered, That all Members who are returned for two or more places in any part of the United Kingdom do make their Election for which of the places they will serve, within one week after it shall appear that there is no question upon the Return for that place; and if any thing shall come in question touching the Return or Election of any Member, he is to withdraw during the time the matter is in debate; and that all Members returned upon double Returns do withdraw till their Returns are determined.

Resolved, That no Peer of the Realm, except such Peers of Ireland as shall for the time being be actually elected, and shall not have declined to serve, for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, hath any right to give his vote in the Election of any Member to serve in Parliament.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament, or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, to concern himself in the election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such Elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a candidate, or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected; or for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission, to influence the Election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament." (*Sir A. Acland-Hood*).

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet) said he proposed to move the omission of certain words, the effect of which would be to confine the operation of the order to the cases of Lords Lieutenants of counties. He did not think the House should continue to endeavour to enforce an authority which they did not possess.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) seconded. He was as great a stickler, he said, for the maintenance of the privileges of the House as anyone, but it did seem to him to be derogatory to the dignity of Parliament for it to pass an order year after year which it had not the courage to enforce.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'Kingdom,' in line 2, to the word 'for,' in line 8."—(*Mr. James Lowther.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The right hon. Gentleman has now raised this question in several sessions, and on each occasion the House by its vote has shown its desire by considerable majorities to maintain this Order. I am not aware of any fresh argument or new circumstances to justify a departure from the practice the House has followed for so many years. In individual instances, no doubt, the Order may not have been observed in the past, and it may be true that the House has no power to enforce it, but I think there are objections which outweigh even these considerations. I believe the Order has a salutary effect, and that it keeps alive a very useful tradition which has worked well in the past. I am sure that the House would not desire that Peers should interfere in elections, neither do I believe that they themselves desire to do so, but I believe that if this Order were deliberately abrogated it would be a direct invitation to them to do so. Under these circumstances I venture to suggest that the House should leave well alone. This is not a matter in which the Government feel great interest, but they do hold that a Sessional Order which has obtained for so many years ought not thus to be changed unless by general consensus of opinion and with the general support of the House. Under these circumstances, I ask the House to reject the Amendment and to pass the Order as usual.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That it is a high infringement of the liberties and privileges of the Commons of the United Kingdom for any Lord of Parliament, or other Peer or Prelate, not being a Peer of Ireland at the time elected, and not having declined to serve for any county, city, or borough of Great Britain, to concern himself in the election of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament, except only any Peer of Ireland, at such Elections in Great Britain respectively where such Peer shall appear as a candidate, or by himself, or any others, be proposed to be elected; or for any Lord Lieutenant or Governor of any county to avail himself of any authority derived from his Commission to influence the Election of any Member to serve for the Commons in Parliament.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been elected or returned a Member of this House, or endeavoured so to be, by bribery, or any other corrupt practices, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against all such persons as shall have been wilfully concerned in such bribery or other corrupt practices.

WITNESSES.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath been tampering with any witness, in respect of his evidence to be given to this House, or any Committee thereof, or directly or indirectly hath endeavoured to deter or hinder any person from appearing or giving evidence, the same is declared to be a high crime or misdemeanour; and this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

Resolved, That if it shall appear that any person hath given false evidence in any case before this House, or any Committee thereof, this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offender.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Ordered, That the Commissioners of the Police of the Metropolis do take care that, during the session of Parliament, the passages through the streets leading to this House be kept free and open, and that no obstruction be permitted to hinder the passage of Members to and from this House, and that no disorder be allowed in Westminster Hall, or in the passages leading to this House, during the Sitting of Parliament, and that there be no annoyance therein or thereabouts; and that the Sergeant at Arms attending this House do communicate this Order to the Commissioners aforesaid.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS.

Ordered, That the Votes and Proceedings of this House be printed, being first perused by Mr. Speaker; and that he do appoint the printing thereof; and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

PRIVILEGES.

Ordered, That a Committee of Privileges be appointed.

OUTLAWRIES BILL.

"For the more effectual preventing of Clandestine Outlawries," read the first time; to be read a second time.

JOURNAL.

Ordered, That the Journal of this House, from the end of the last session to the end of the present session, with an Index thereto, be printed.

Ordered, That 500 Copies of the said Journal and Index be printed by the appointment and under the direction of Sir Courtenay Peregrine Ilbert, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., the Clerk of this House.

Ordered, That the said Journal and Index be printed by such person as shall be licensed by Mr. Speaker, and that no other person do presume to print the same.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The following Papers, presented by His Majesty's Command during the Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896—

1. Explosions (Cotton Powder Company's Factory at Faversham).—Copy of Report by Major A. Cooper-Key, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an Explosion of nitro-glycerine which occurred in the Final Washing House of the Factory of the Cotton Powder Company, Limited, at Uplees Marshes, Faversham, Kent, on the 23rd August, 1903.

2. Explosions (Cotton Powder Company's Factory at Faversham).—Copy of Report by Captain J. H. Thomson, His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Explosives, to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on the circumstances attending an Explosion of nitro-glycerine which occurred in the Final Washing House of the Factory of the Cotton Powder Company, Limited, at Uplees Marshes, Faversham, Kent, on the 9th November, 1903.

3. Sewage Disposal (Royal Commission).—Copy of Fourth Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire and report what methods of Treating and Disposing of Sewage may properly be adopted, together with Vol. II., Minutes of Evidence, Vol. III., Reports on Bacteriological Investigations, and Vol. IV., Reports on the Land Treatment of Sewage and Methods of Chemical Analysis of Sewage Effluents.

4. Historical Manuscripts (Royal Commission).—Copy of Report on the Manuscripts of Mrs. Stopford-Sackville of Drayton House, Northamptonshire, Vol. I.

5. Historical Manuscripts (Royal Commission).—Copy of Report on the Manuscripts of the Duke of Buccleuch and

Queensberry, K.G., K.T., preserved at Drumlanrig Castle, Vol. II.

6. Arsenical Poisoning (Royal Commission).—Copy of Final Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of Arsenical Poisoning arising from the Consumption of Beer and other articles of Food or Drink. Part I. Report.

7. Arsenical Poisoning (Royal Commission).—Copy of Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of Arsenical Poisoning arising from the consumption of Beer and other articles of Food or Drink. Part II. Vol. I. of Minutes of Evidence and Appendices.

8. Arsenical Poisoning (Royal Commission).—Copy of Final Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the subject of Arsenical Poisoning arising from the consumption of Beer and other articles of Food or Drink. Part II. Vol. II. of Minutes of Evidence and Appendices.

9. Electricity in Mines.—Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to inquire into the use of Electricity in Mines, with Minutes of Evidence and Appendices.

10. War in South Africa (Royal Commission).—Copy of Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the military preparations and other matters connected with the War in South Africa, with Minutes of Evidence (Vols. I. and II.) and Appendices.

11. Ankylostomiasis.—Copy of Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by J. S. Haldane, esquire, M.D., F.R.S., on Ankylostomiasis in Westphalian Collieries.

12. Mines and Quarries.—Copy of General Report and Statistics for the year 1902; Part II., Labour; General Report and Statistics relating to persons employed and Accidents at Mines and Quarries in the United Kingdom, and to the enforcement of the Mines and Quarries Acts.

13. Mines and Quarries.—Copy of General Report and Statistics for the year 1902, Part III., Output; General Report and Statistics relating to the Output and Value of the Minerals raised in the United Kingdom, the amount and value of the metals produced, and the exports and imports of Minerals.

14. Prisons (England and Wales).—Copy of Report of the Commissioners of Prisons and the Directors of Convict Prisons, with Appendices, for the year ended 31st March, 1903.

15. Factories and Workshops.—Copy of Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Workshops for 1902. Part II. Tables.

16. Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Great Britain).—Copy of Forty-sixth Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools for 1902. Part II. General Report and Appendices III. to XI.

17. Police (Metropolis).—Copy of Report of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis for the year 1902.

18. Inebriates Acts (Inspector's Report).—Copy of Report of the Inspector under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, for the year 1902.

19. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the City of Bath, in the county of Somerset (being extensions and deviations of the existing and authorised undertaking of Bath Electric Tramways, Limited), and the abandonment of the construction of certain other Light Railways already authorised in the same city (Bath Electric Tramways (Light Railways Extensions) Order, 1903).

20. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Llandudno and Colwyn Bay Light Railway Order, 1898 (Llandudno and Colwyn Bay Light Railway (Deviation and Amendment) Order, 1903).

21. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the county of Kent, from the River Thames near Greenhithe to Dart-

ford and Eynsford, with Branches to Swanley Junction and to Stansted (Dartford District Light Railways Order, 1903).

22. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending The Lastingham and Rosedale Light Railway Order, 1900 (Lastingham and Rosedale Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1903).

23. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, reviving the powers granted and extending the period limited by The Bankfoot Light Railway Order, 1898, for the compulsory purchase of lands, and extending the period limited by that Order for the completion of the Railway and works by that Order authorised (Bankfoot Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1903).

24. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the borough of Burton-upon-Trent, the urban districts of Swadlincote and of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and the rural districts of Repton and of Hartshorne and Seales and of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, in the counties of Stafford, Derby, and Leicester (Burton and Ashby Light Railway Order, 1903).

25. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the borough and rural district of Dover and parish of River, in the county of Kent (Dover and River Light Railway Order, 1903).

26. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Bere Alston and Calstock Light Railway Order, 1900 (Bere Alston and Calstock Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1903).

27. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Southampton, from Totton to Fawley (Totton, Hythe, and Fawley Light Railway Order, 1903).

28. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the rural district of Dartford, in the county of Kent (Dartford Light Railway (Extension) Order, 1903).

29. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, transferring to the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the borough of Nelson the powers conferred upon the Barrowford Urban District Council by the Barrowford Light Railway Order, 1901, and amending that Order and the Nelson Light Railways Order, 1901 (Barrowford Light Railway Order, 1901 (Transfer, &c.) Order, 1903).

30. Light Railways Act, 1896.—Copy of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the county of Gloucester, in the parishes of Henbury and Shirehampton (Avonmouth Light Railway Order, 1903).

31. Railways (Continuous Brakes).—Copy of Return by Railway Companies of the United Kingdom on the use of Continuous Brakes for the six months ending the 30th June, 1903.

32. Statistical Abstracts (Foreign Countries).—Copy of Statistical Abstract for the principal and other Foreign Countries in each year from 1891 to 1900–1901 (Twenty-ninth Number).

33. Commercial Mission to South Africa.—Copy of Report received from Mr. Henry Birchenough, the Special Commissioner appointed by the Board of Trade to inquire into and report upon the present position and future prospects of British Trade in South Africa.

34. Colonial Import Duties,—Copy of Return relating to the Rates of Import Duties levied upon the principal and other Articles Imported into the Colonial and other Possessions of the United Kingdom.

35. Conciliation Act, 1896 (Trade Disputes).—Copy of Fourth Report by the Board of Trade of Proceedings under the Conciliation Act, 1896.

36. East India (Sanitary Measures).—Copy of Report on Sanitary Measures in India in 1901–2 (Vol. XXXV.).

37. East India (Irrigation).—Copy of Report of the Indian Irrigation Commission, 1901–3. Part I. General. Part II. Provincial. Part III. Maps. Part IV. Appendix.

38. East India (Railways).—Copy of Report on the administration and working of Indian Railways, by Thomas Robertson, C.V.O., Special Commissioner for Indian Railways.

39. East India (Statistical Abstract).—Copy of Statistical Abstract relating to British India from 1892–3 to 1901–2. (Thirty-seventh Number).

40. East India (Trade).—Copy of Review of Trade of India for 1902–3.

41. East India (Trade).—Copy of Tables relating to the Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries for the five years 1898–9 to 1902–3.

42. Imperial Institute (Indian Section).—Copy of Annual Report of the Imperial Institute (Indian Section) for the year 1902–3.

43. Irish Land Commission (Proceedings).—Copy of Return of Proceedings during the months of May, June, July, August, September, and October, 1903.

44. National Education (Ireland).—Copy of Appendix to the Sixty-ninth Report of the Commissioners, being for the year 1902. Section I.

45. National Education (Ireland).—Copy of Appendix to the Sixty-ninth Report of the Commissioners, being for the year 1902. Section II.

46. National Education (Ireland).—Copy of Appendix to the Sixty-ninth Report of the Commissioners, being for the year 1902. Section III.

47. Queen's College (Galway).—Copy of Report of the President for the Session 1902–3.

48. Agricultural Statistics (Ireland).—Copy of Tables showing the extent in statute acres and the produce of the Crops for the year 1903.

49. Agricultural Statistics (Ireland) (Migratory Labourers).—Copy of Report and Tables relating to Irish Migratory Agricultural and other Labourers for the year 1903.

50. Agricultural Statistics (Ireland).—Copy of Abstracts showing the Acreage under Crops and the number of Live Stock in each county and province of Ireland for the year 1902–3.

51. Agrarian Outrages (Ireland).—Copy of Return for the quarter ended 30th September, 1903.

52. Agrarian Outrages (Ireland).—Copy of Return for the quarter ended 31st December, 1903.

53. Evictions (Ireland).—Copy of Return of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 30th September, 1903.

54. Evictions (Ireland).—Copy of Return of Evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 31st December, 1903.

55. Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Eviction Notices).—Copy of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 30th September, 1903.

56. Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Eviction Notices).—Copy of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 31st December, 1903.

57. Banking, Railway, and Canal Statistics (Ireland).—Copy of Report on the Banking, Railway, and Canal Statistics of Ireland for the half-year ended 30th June, 1903.

58. Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Ireland).—Copy of Forty-first Report of the Inspector for the year 1902.

59. Shell-Fish (Ireland). — Copy of Report of the Local Government Board for Ireland on the Shell-Fish Layings on the Irish coast as respects their liability to sewage contamination.

60. Board of Education.—Copy of Reports from University Colleges, 1903.

61. Board of Education (Special Reports).—Copy of Special Reports on Educational Subjects. School Training and Early Employment of Lancashire Children.

62. Board of Education (Education Committees).—Copy of Statement of Schemes for the Formation of Education Committees approved during the period 1st August to 30th November, 1903, by the Board of Education, under Section 17 of the Education Act of 1902.

63. Board of Education.—Copy of Return showing the Number of Persons on the Teachers' Register under Regulation 5 (2) (a) of the Teachers' Registration Regulations.

64. Board of Education.—Copy of Regulations relating to the Royal College of Science, the Royal College of Art, and to Museums under the Board of Education from 1st August, 1903, to 31st July, 1904.

65. Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.—Copy of Report on the Results of Investigations into Cider Making carried out on behalf of the Bath and West and Southern Counties Society in the years 1893 to 1902, by F. J. Lloyd, F.C.S., F.I.C.

66. Postal Convention (Denmark).—Copy of Agreement between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of Denmark. Dated 22nd August, 14th September, 1903.

67. Wireless Telegraphy.—Copy of Procés-Verbaux and Protocole Final of the Preliminary International Conference at Berlin on Wireless Telegraphy.

68. Meteorology.—Copy of Report of the Meteorological Council to the Royal Society for the year ending 31st March, 1903.

69. Preferential and Retaliatory Duties.—Copy of Return of Preferential and Retaliatory Duties imposed, raised, reduced, or repealed in the years 1823, 1824, 1825, 1826, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1853, and 1860, stating (1) the rate of duty levied, and (2) the revenue derived from, and the quantities imported, of the articles concerned, in the three years preceding and in the three years following such change.

70. Chapter House, Westminster.—Copy of Memoranda by Professor Church, F.R.S., furnished to the First Commissioner of His Majesty's Works, &c., concerning the treatment of Decayed Stone-Work in the Chapter House, Westminster Abbey.

71. Peterhead Harbour.—Copy of Reports respecting Peterhead Harbour Works.

72. Colonial Reports (Annual).—Copies of Reports Nos. 394 (Turks and Caicos Islands, Annual Report for 1902), 395 (Seychelles, Annual Report for 1902), 396 (Ceylon, Annual Report for 1902), 397, (Gold Coast, Annual Report for 1902), 398 (Barbados, Report for 1902–3), 399 (Fiji, Annual Report for 1902), 400 (Lagos, Annual Report for 1902), 401 (British Solomon Islands, Report for 1902–3), 402 (Cocos-Keeling Islands, Annual Report for 1903), 403 (St. Vincent, Report for 1902–3), 404 (Grenada, Annual Report for 1902), 405 (Southern Nigeria, Annual Report for 1902), 406 (Straits Settlements, Annual Report for 1902), 407 (Trinidad and Tobago, Report for 1902–3), 408 (Basutoland, Report for 1902–3), 409 (Northern Nigeria, Annual Report for 1902), 410 (Malta, Report for 1902–3), 411 (St. Lucia, Annual Report for 1902), 412 (Mauritius, Annual Report for 1902), 413 (British Guiana, Report for 1902–3).

73. Colonial Reports (Miscellaneous).—Copies of Reports Nos. 22 (Seychelles, Report on Para Rubber), 23 (Dominica, Roads and Land Settlement. Report on the Expenditure of the Parliamentary Grant-in-Aid), 24 (Grenada, Report on Land Settlement in Carriacou), 25 (Hong-Kong, Bubonic Plague. Memorandum on the Treatment of Patients in their own Homes and in Local Hospitals).

74. Canada.—Copy of Canadian Sessional Paper containing Correspondence in connection with the German Tariff.

75. West Indies.—Copy of Further Correspondence relating to the Volcanic Eruptions in St. Vincent and Martinique in 1902 and 1903.

76. Straits Settlements.—Copy of Reports on the Federated Malay States for 1902.

77. Cyprus.—Copy of Despatch from the High Commissioner covering a Report on the Agricultural Fund for the year ended 31st March, 1903.

78. Marriage and Divorce Law (Colonies).—Copy of Papers relating to the Laws of Marriage and Divorce in self-governing British Colonies.

79. Transvaal.—Reports of the Transvaal Labour Commission.

80. Army (Recruiting). — Copy of Annual Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting for the first nine months of the year 1903.

81. Army (Volunteer Corps).—Copy of Annual Return of the Volunteer Corps of Great Britain for the year 1902.

82. Military Prisons.—Copy of Report on the Discipline and Management of Military Prisons in 1902.

83. Patriotic Fund.—Copy of Forty-second Report of the Royal Commissioners of the Patriotic Fund.

84. Rifle Ranges.—Copy of Return of Rifle Ranges available for Regular Troops and Militia, and of Rifle and Carbine Ranges available for the Imperial Yeomanry and Volunteer Forces [Address 16th July, 1903; *Mr. Courtenay Warner*].

85. Judicial Statistics (Scotland).—Copy of Report on the Judicial Statistics of Scotland for the year 1902.

86. Census of Scotland, 1901.—Copy of Eleventh Decennial Census of the Population of Scotland, taken 31st March, 1901, with Report (Vol. III.).

87. Board of Manufactures (Scotland).—Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the administration of the Board of Manufactures (Scotland).

88. Licensing (Scotland) Act, 1903.—Copy of Tables showing the Populations of Counties, Local Government Districts, and Burghs in Scotland with reference to the Provisions of the Licensing (Scotland) Act.

89. Naval Manœuvres. — Copy of Report of the Naval Manœuvres of 1903.

90. Census of England and Wales, 1901.—Copy of Index to the Population Tables for England and Wales in the county volumes of the Census Report, 1901.

91. Highways.—Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee appointed by the President of the Local Government Board to inquire into the subject of Highways Authorities and Administration in England and Wales, with Minutes of Evidence.

92. Treaty Series (No. 12, 1903).—Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting Commercial relations between France and Jamaica. Signed at London, 8th August, 1902. Ratifications exchanged at London, 12th August, 1903.

93. Treaty Series (No. 13, 1903).—Copy of Accession of Mexico to the Industrial Property Convention, 1883, and additional Act of 1900. 7th September, 1903.

94. Treaty Series (No. 14, 1903).—Copy of Accession of Germany to the Industrial Property Convention, 1883, etc. 1st May, 1903.

95. Treaty Series (No. 15, 1903).—Copy of Parcel Post Convention, with detailed regulations, between the United Kingdom and Chile. Signed at Santiago, 21st October, 1902.

96. Treaty Series (No. 16, 1903).—Copy of Protocol for submitting to Arbitration certain questions as to the interpretation of treaties with Japan with regard to leases held in perpetuity. Signed at Tokio, 28th August, 1902.

97. Treaty Series (No. 17, 1903).—Copy of Treaty between the United Kingdom and China respecting Commercial relations, etc. Signed at Shangai, 5th September, 1902. Ratifications exchanged at Peking, 28th July, 1903.

98. Treaty Series (No. 18, 1903).—Copy of Agreement between the United Kingdom and France providing for the Settlement by Arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the two Governments. Signed at London, 14th October, 1903.

99. Treaty Series (No. 1, 1904).—Copy of Convention for the establishment of a Parcel Post Service between the United States and Hong-Kong. Signed at Washington, 21st November, 1903.

100. Turkey (No. 4, 1903).—Copy of further correspondence respecting the affairs of South-Eastern Europe.

101. Turkey (No. 1, 1904).—Copy of further correspondence respecting the Affairs of South-Eastern Europe, March to September, 1903.

102. China (No. 3, 1903).—Copy of Report by Acting Consul Litton on a journey in North-West Yunnan.

103. China (No. 1, 1904).—Copy of Report by Mr. C. W. Campbell, His Majesty's Consul at Wuchow, on a journey in Mongolia (with a Map).

104. Africa (No. 11, 1903).—Copy of Reports on the Geology of the East Africa Protectorate, by the late E. E. Walker (Government Geologist).

105. Africa (No. 12, 1903).—Copy of Report by the Mombasa - Victoria (Uganda) Railway Committee on the Progress of the Works and Revenue Working, 1902–3 (with two maps).

106. Africa (No. 13, 1903).—Copy of Report on the Trade and General Conditions of the British Central Africa Protectorate for the year 1902–3 by Major F. B. Pearce, Acting Commissioner.

107. Africa (No. 14, 1903).—Copy of Despatch to certain of His Majesty's Representatives abroad in regard to alleged cases of ill-treatment of Natives, and to the existence of Trade Monopolies in the Independent State of the Congo.

108. Africa (No. 15, 1903). Copy of General Report on the Uganda Protectorate for the year, ending 31st March, 1903.

109. Forestry Laws (Commercial No. 8, 1903).—Copy of Reports from certain of His Majesty's Representatives abroad respecting Forestry Laws.

110. Most-Favoured-Nation Clauses (Commercial No. 9, 1903).—Copy of Return of Most-Favoured-Nation Clauses in existing Treaties of Commerce and Navigation between Great Britain and Foreign Powers, stating the period when terminable, and showing whether they apply to the British Colonies, in force on the 1st July, 1903.

111. Houses of Legislature (Official Reports of Proceedings), Miscellaneous (No. 5, 1903,—Copy of Correspondence showing the systems in force in certain foreign countries for publishing Official Reports of Proceedings in the Houses of Legislature.

112. Drama (State or Municipal Support) (Miscellaneous, No. 6, 1903).—Copy of Return as to Financial Support given from State or Municipal Funds to Dramatic, Operatic, or Musical Performances in Foreign Countries.

113. Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3066 to 3113.

114. Trade Reports (Miscellaneous Series).—Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, Nos. 596 to 601.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY PENSIONS.

Copy presented, of Return showing the names of all Constabulary Officers now in receipt of Pensions, of all Head Constables, Sergeants, and Constables, and of all Widows and Children to whom Pensions have been granted since the Constabulary Estimate for 1903–4 was prepared, with the amount and date of Pension in each case [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IMPERIAL OTTOMAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1855.

Copy presented, of Account for the year 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TREASURY BILLS.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 24th January, 1904, amending the Regulation laid down in the Treasury Minute of the 31st May, 1889, relating to Tenders for Treasury Bills [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 1.]

ST. LOUIS EXHIBITION COMMISSION, 1904.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 29th August, 1903, directing that the Accounts of the Royal Commission for the St. Louis Exhibition, 1904, shall be examined and audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1859.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 20th August, 1903, awarding a Special Pension to Sir Kenelm Edward Digby, K.C.B., late Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATIONS.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 21st November, 1903, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Deputy-Governor of a Convict Prison in Ireland professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are required [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATIONS.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 10th November, 1903, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Secretary to the Civil Service Commissioners professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are required [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 30th September, 1903, declaring that Thomas Ashbrook Forster, Postmaster, Newtown Post Office, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 2nd October, 1903, declaring that Alfred Wellham, machine hand, Royal Small Arms Factory, Birmingham, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 2nd October, 1903, declaring that Charles Chamberlain, principal foreman, Royal Carriage Department, War Office, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 23rd December, 1903, declaring that William Edward Bird, engine driver, Royal Gun Factory, War Department, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Copy presented, of Return of the amount of Notes issued more than forty years which have not been presented for payment, and which have been written off on the 28th October, 1903, from the total amount of Notes issued from the Issue Department of the Bank of England [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

Account presented, showing the gross amount received and expended on account of the Telegraph Service during the year ended 31st March, 1903, &c. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 2.]

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (PARTICULARS OF PIECE WORK WAGES) (WEARING APPAREL).

Copy presented, of Order, dated 17th December, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying with modifications the provisions of Section 116 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to the manufacture of Wearing Apparel, and revoking the Order dated 22nd April, 1897 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (SPECIAL EXCEPTION — CREAMERIES).

Copy presented, of Order, dated 23rd October, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 42 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, granting certain special exceptions to Creameries, and revoking the Order (Ireland) dated 9th June, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (SPECIAL EXCEPTION — OVERTIME).

Copy presented, of Order, dated 29th December, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 49 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, with regard to the overtime employment of women on not more than thirty days in the year; and revoking all existing Orders [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (MANUFACTURE OF EARTHENWARE AND CHINA).

Copy presented, of Amended Special Rules, dated 30th December, 1901, and 28th November, 1903, for the Manufacture of Earthenware and China, as established by the Awards of the Umpire, Lord James of Hereford [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (DANGEROUS AND UNHEALTHY INDUSTRIES).

Copy presented, of Regulations, dated 21st November, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 79 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, for the Manufacture of Electric Accumulators [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (HEALTH—BAKEHOUSES).

Copy presented, of Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, dated 30th December, 1903, in pursuance of Section 3, Sub-section (2), of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, modifying the proportion of cubic feet of space to be provided in certain Bakehouses [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (SPECIAL EXCEPTION—LIMEWASHING).

Copy presented, of Order, dated 2nd November, 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department in pursuance of Section 1 (4) of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, granting special exceptions from the provisions respecting limewashing, &c., to certain factories and parts of factories; and revoking the Orders dated 16th November, 1895, 8th February, 1896, and 26th March, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EXPLOSIONS (BLENHEIM ENGINEERING COMPANY'S FACTORY AT TUNNEL LANE, GREENWICH MARSHES).

Copy presented, of Report by Major A. Cooper-Key, His Majesty's Inspector of Explosives, to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the circumstances attending an explosion of fulminate composition at the factory of the Blenheim Engineering Company, Limited, at Tunnel Lane, Greenwich Marshes, on the 18th December, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS.

INCORPORATION OF ASTON MANOR.

Copy presented, of Charter of Incorporation of the Borough of Aston Manor, dated 17th August, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INCORPORATION OF BROMLEY.

Copy presented, of Charter of Incorporation of the Borough of Bromley-dated 17th August, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INCORPORATION OF GILLINGHAM.

Copy presented, of Charter of Incorporation of the Borough of Gillingham, dated 17th August, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INCORPORATION OF HORNSEY.

Copy presented, of Charter of Incorporation of the Borough of Hornsey, dated 17th August, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES (REGULATIONS).

Copy presented, of Regulations made with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Home Department for the management and discipline of the certified Inebriate Reformatory at Ackworth, Yorkshire [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INEBRIATES ACTS, 1879 TO 1899 (REGULATIONS FOR STATE INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES).

Copy presented, of New Regulations made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department prescribing the diet for ill-conducted or idle inmates of State Inebriate Reformatories, and revoking Regulations 64 (b) and 66 (b), and so much of Appendix A as relates to the diet of ill-conducted or idle inmates, of the Regulation dated 21st June, 1901 [by Act); to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of Licence granted to Ellis Smith, under the Provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of a Licence granted to Patrick Hardigan, under the Provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE.)

Copy presented, of a Licence granted to Mary Ann Phillips, a convict under detention in Aylesbury Prison, permitting her to be at large on condition that she enter the Home of the Holy Rood at Worthing [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of Licence granted to Timothy W. Nolan, a convict, to which are annexed conditions other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto, [Ordered 13th August, 1903; *Mr. M'Govern*]; to lie upon the Table.

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) ACT, 1899.

Copy presented, of Thirty-three Minutes by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland sanctioning Forms of Instruction for certain County Boroughs, Counties, and Urban Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PHARMACY ACTS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Order in Council, dated 9th October, 1903, approving of a Regulation made by the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

MILITIA ACT, 1882 (DEPUTY LIEUTENANTS, IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return of descriptions of qualifications of Deputy Lieutenants lodged during 1903, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

WINTER ASSIZES (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of an Order in Council, dated 9th October, 1903, and three Orders, dated 4th November, 1903, for holding Winter Assizes in Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Time-Table of Examinations for 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Additional Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland as to Experimental Science and Drawing [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of amended Rules made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland for the Examination in Music [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Additional Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland as to Experimental and Practical Science [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT (IRELAND), 1877.

Copy presented, of Order in Council, dated 1st December, 1903, giving effect to a Rule of Court [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT (IRELAND), 1877.

Copies presented, of two Orders in Council, dated 21st January, 1904, giving effect to Rules of Court under the Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.

Account presented, of the Sums received and paid in respect of the Wages and Effects of Deceased Seamen in the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GENERAL LIGHTHOUSE FUND.

Account presented, of the General Lighthouse Fund showing the Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 3.]

SEAMEN'S SAVINGS BANKS (MONEY ORDERS AND TRANSMISSION OF WAGES).

Accounts presented, of all Deposits received and repaid during the year ended 20th November, 1902, and Statement as to Money Orders issued and paid from 1855 to 31st March, 1903, and of Receipts and Payments in connection with the Transmission of Seamen's Wages from 1878 to 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 4.]

RAMSGATE HARBOUR.

Copy presented, of Statement of the Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31st March, 1903, together with an Account of the Receipt and Issue of Stores [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 5.]

WEST HIGHLAND RAILWAY (EXTENSION FROM BANAVIE TO MALLAIG).

Copy presented, of Second Annual Report by the Board of Trade as to the condition and working of the Banavie and Mallaig Railway, the rates and charges for traffic, and the receipts and expenditure of any Company in working the Railway, for the year ended 1902–3 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 6.]

ARMY (PAY, NON-EFFECTIVE PAY, AND ALLOWANCES).

Copy presented, of List of Exceptions to the Army Regulations as to Pay and Allowances sanctioned during the year 1902–3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUGAR.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 30th July, 1903; *Colonel Denny*]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN INDIA).

Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in India, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 30th September, 1903, &c. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 7.]

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).

Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in England, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 30th September, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 8.]

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (CAMBRIDGE).

Copy presented, of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, on 16th March, 1903, in substitution for the existing Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 9.]

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (CAMBRIDGE).

Copy presented, of Statutes made by the Governing Body of Magdalene College, Cambridge, on 22nd June, 1903, in substitution for Statute XXV. of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 10.]

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of New College, Oxford, on 17th June, 1903, amending certain clauses of Statute III. of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 11.]

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of St. John's College, Oxford, on 15th May, 1903, amending Statute XV., 1, of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 12.]

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877 (OXFORD).

Copy presented, of Statute made by the Governing Body of Oriel College, Oxford, on 24th April, 1903, amending Statute IV., 7, of the Statutes of the College [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 13.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Copies presented, of Two Orders in Council of the 29th January, 1904, providing for the re-measurement for tonnage of French and Spanish vessels in British ports [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Copy of Order in Council of the 9th October, 1903, applying the provisions of Sections 2 and 3 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, in the case of deserters from Japanese vessels [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Copies presented, of Orders in Council of the 16th November, 1903, confirming bye-laws made by the Pilotage Authority for the Ports of Gloucester and Burntisland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT ACTS, 1844 TO 1886.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 9th October, 1903, giving effect to the accession of Denmark to the International Copyright Convention of 9th September, 1886, and Additional Act of Paris, 1897 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.

Order in Council under the Act (The Zanzibar Order in Council, 1903) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1858.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 8th December, 1903, approving a statement of proposed new and revised appointments and alterations of salaries in the establishment of the Secretary of State for India in Council [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL ACTS.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 9th October, 1903, sanctioning certain pensions now granted from the Funds of Greenwich Hospital being supplemented from Naval funds [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT, 1878.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of 19th October, 1903, approving a new denomination of Standard Weight of Fifty Pounds, or "Half-Cental" [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889 (ORDINANCE).

Copy presented, of University Court Ordinance No. IX. (Edinburgh, No. 3) Regulations for the Degree of Bachelor of Law (B.L.) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 14.]

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

Copy presented, of Report on the state of the Finances of the University, made by the University Court, for the year 31st August, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 15.]

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Edinburgh for the year 1902–3 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 16.]

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of Glasgow for 1902–3 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 17.]

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1903.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Secretary for Scotland under Section 109 of the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Rule made by the Secretary for Scotland appointing the Police Cells at Kirkcaldy to be a legal Prison for the detention of untried prisoners for a period not exceeding fourteen days before or during trial, and of convicted prisoners for a period not exceeding seven days from the date of conviction [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 18.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3116 and 3117 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

UNITED STATES (No. 2, 1904).

Copy presented, of Map to accompany Correspondence respecting the Alaska Boundary (United States, No. 1, 1904) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Lunacy.—Copy of Report to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, the number of patients seen, and the number of miles travelled by the Visitors of Lunatics between 1st April, 1903, and 30th September, 1903 [by Act].

2. Lunacy.—Copy of Return of all sums received by the Visitors of Lunatics for travelling expenses, or upon any other account, from 1st January to 31st December, 1903 [by Act].

3. Supreme Court (Rules).—Copy of Rules of the Supreme Court, dated 15th January 1904 [by Act].

4. County Court (Rules).—Copy of County Court Rules, 1903 [by Act].

5. Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.—Copy of Accounts of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board for the year ending 1st July, 1903 [by Act].

6. Public Records (Disposal of Documents).—Copy of Additional Rule under the Public Record Office Acts, 1877 and 1898, for the disposal of certain Documents [by Act].

7. Public Records (Colonial Office).—Copy of Schedule containing a List and Particulars of Classes of Documents existing or accruing in the Office of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act].

KING'S SPEECH.

Mr. SPEAKER reported His Majesty's Speech, and read it to the House. (*See* page 1).

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

*MR. HARDY (Kent, Ashford): In rising to undertake the responsibility that falls on me to-day, I will not ask for that indulgence which has so often been asked by Members standing in a similar position, because during the twelve years I have sat in this House I have never received anything but courtesy and kindness from all sides. But, as in this year of climatic disturbance we have often found moments of calm and quiet, so after the tempestuous controversies of the recess it may be hoped that in this House my hon. friend and myself may enjoy a few moments of quiet sympathy. The Speech from the Throne itself leads us to a somewhat similar feeling, because in its opening paragraph it breathes of peace and goodwill. Used as we have been, alas, on many occasions in recent years, in the Gracious Speech from the Throne to references to wars and to the consequences of war, we must now feel a great sense of satisfaction when we find paragraph after paragraph pointing out other ways of settling international difficulties. It suggests a hopeful augury for a future when peaceful arbitration will take the place of the dread arbitrament of war. In this I think a right note has been struck in the first paragraph, which alludes to our relations with our neighbour the great country of France. That personal note is raised by the allusion to the King's recent visit to that country, and I must say that when we look at this and other paragraphs one cannot doubt that we owe much in this regard to the tact, *bonhomie*, and diplomatic powers of His Majesty himself. There is reference also to another exchange of international courtesies. We have been accustomed to visits between the heads of great States, but for the first time there has been an interchange of visits between the legislatures of the two countries, thereby helping to cement a friendship which I trust may continue. We heartily welcomed those who came to us as guests from France, and we in our turn were welcomed with equal warmth. We may trust that the people of the two great countries so contiguous to each other may long remain on terms of amity and of friendship. We have to remember that if we seek these new ways of deciding international disputes, there must always be those who get their way and those who are unsuccessful. In the next paragraph we find an allusion to that tribunal which has been dealing with questions of great difficulty and delicacy which had arisen between Canada and the United States. While we may congratulate ourselves that at last these ancient controversies have been put an end to, we have to remember that the adverse decision tried peculiarly our kinsmen across the sea, and we cannot withhold our admiration of the Canadian people for the calmness and good sense with which they received a decision which was undoubtedly unpalatable to them.

I pass on to the next paragraph dealing with affairs in the Far East. We all know that the fear of war is brooding over a vast area of country. We ourselves have in late years had bitter experience of the sacrifices of life and treasure involved in war. But that experience was only in connection with a land war, and we do not know what would be the result of a war by sea as well as by land, fought between the ancient Empire of Russia and the newer Empire of Japan. I think we may feel satisfied, however, that the Government —with its own experience of what war means—will do their utmost to maintain peace. Our interests in those distant countries are very great, and deplorable would be the effect of war upon them—commercially, politically, and in every other way. Whatever the issue of the war might be, we cannot but feel that any alteration in the balance of power in that part might lead to results which might be far more deplorable than even any attack on our trade would be. At all events, as long as there is peace there is hope, and trusting in the good sense of the Emperor of Russia and our allies, the Japanese, we may still hope for a peaceful outcome of the negotiations.

I now pass from foreign matters to those which affect our colonies. I think it must be a matter of great satisfaction to us that the Commonwealth of Australia and the Colony of New Zealand, following up what occurred at the Colonial Conference in 1902, have now expressed their willingness to take up their responsibilities, to some extent, in connection with Imperial defence, and I think we ought to note that the acceptance of responsibility on their part is at the same time an acknowledgment of the necessity of unity of policy in this connection rather than a mere selfish interest. They are willing to contribute towards Imperial defence in an Imperial manner. I think, too, we may feel very glad that the Legislature of New Zealand, following the example of Canada and of South Africa, has given sanction to a tariff which gives preference to the produce of the Mother Country in the markets of New Zealand, and I hope that this example may be followed in other parts of the Empire. With regard to the mission to Thibet, the Papers which are to be laid shortly before the House will, of course, explain its objects, and here again it must be a matter for satisfaction that it is a political mission, undertaken by the concurrence of the Suzerain Power, to enforce treaty obligations, and that it is in no sense aggressive or caused by any desire to push forward the limits of the Empire. It is, in fact, a peaceful mission for the promotion of our interests, and we hope that like many which have gone before it may remove difficulties which have been a constant source of friction on our borders.

Next I come to the Estimates. The paragraph as to these has been framed in a rather different form as compared with previous Speeches. Undoubtedly economy must be the ideal which we put forward in connection with our financial responsibility. There can be no shirking of the burdens which fall upon us in consequence of the necessity for defending this Empire, but I am sure, judging from the criticisms which have been delivered, that the national interests are closely connected with the question of defence, and we must be prepared to meet a very considerable expenditure in connection with our two great defensive forces. Only lately the Government had to purchase two battleships, the acquiring of which by other nations would have entailed very great expenditure on ourselves in order that we might maintain that standard which is absolutely necessary to secure our supremacy on the seas. We have obtained those vessels, and I do not doubt the House will acknowledge as a patriotic duty that they must be paid for. In reference to the Navy there is one critic whom we shall very much miss—one whose frank presence, rugged eloquence, and transparent single-mindedness always made his contributions to our naval debates most welcome. We shall always miss such critics, because we know that their criticisms are levelled against what they believe to be actual defects by which the supremacy of the Navy is impaired.

I do not think it would be wise to dwell to-day upon the other side of our defences. It was only yesterday the country had the advantage of learning the opinion of experts on the question of War Office reform, but it undoubtedly points to the fact that great expenditure must be incurred, though we may also hope that in future the return will be a little more worth the money. One paragraph in the Report of the War Office Reconstruction Committee seems very appropriate to the occasion. They say—

> "The experience of the South African campaign has clearly shown that the system of administration prevailing was not adapted to the requirements of war, and an examination of the methods and regulations of the War Office strengthens the impressions that the real object for which this Department exists—the preparation of the military forces of the Crown for war—has not been attained."

If we have not attained that object, I am sure the House, backed up by the country, will insist on it now being attained.

In the later paragraphs of His Majesty's Gracious Speech, there is promised legislation of a social character, dealing with matters which have been thoroughly inquired into by Committees and Commissions in the past few years, and I hope that those matters will receive the careful consideration of the House. During the last two or three years we have passed measures dealing with the sale of intoxicating liquors in England and Scotland, and one characteristic of those Bills was that they were debated with good temper and a serious desire to remedy actual defects in the law without any unnecessary opposition or obstruction. May I appeal to the House that in further amending the law we should approach the matter in the same spirit and with the same desire to remove defects and so bring about real temperance reform? We cannot expect such a matter to be uncontroversial, and when we attempt to deal with such questions as the permanency of licences, compensation, the restriction of the number of licences, and the discretion of the licensing authority, we are certainly in rather deep water. But is it not our business to find some solution of a question which, even in the opinion of those who have been most devoted to temperance reform, is a very real difficulty and a stumbling block in their path? I need not use my own words, as fortunately I can refer to words written by an expert in this matter which are better than any I could use. In a recent pamphlet the hon. Member for the Spen Valley Division of Yorkshire uses these words—

> "The necessity for abolishing and the right to abolish licences in the public interest is fully admitted, but the difficulty and hardship which are involved in selecting the individuals upon whom the loss shall fall is felt to be so great that it blocks the way both to the efficient administration of the present law and to the passing of the reforms that some of us earnestly desire.

He goes on to say—

> "Some of our friends have been so long and, to a large extent, so exclusively engaged in conflict with the liquor traffic that they have come to act and talk as though they and the liquor people were the only parties to be consulted. They almost entirely overlook and ignore that great middle element in the community which is not identified with either the temperance or the liquor party, but which is the majority of the nation and is the element in our midst with whom the ultimate decision will really rest."

It is to that middle element we have to appeal, for if it is difficult for the Legislature to take upon itself the duty of deciding between licensees, it is also a somewhat arduous duty to throw upon the licensing authorities. Since the question of compensation was last fully discussed in this House, there has been a growing feeling on every side that some form of compensation must be devised if ever you are to have a settlement of this difficult problem. Surely, then, we ought to approach it this year with a desire to find a solution. The Royal Commission, both in its Majority and its Minority Report, decided on compensation, either in value from public funds or from the trade, or by a time limit. Last year, by a majority of two to one, this House decided in favour of compensation, and during the recent recess a great temperance manifesto has been sent out, appealing to the common-sense of middle class opinion, in which it is said that some form of compensation is necessary. Public opinion being thus formed, I trust we shall approach the question with a desire to remedy the immediate grievance caused by the action of certain licensing authorities in the country, and, at the same time, devise some means by which licences may be restricted without doing injustice to individuals, so that eventually we may approach a settlement of the question which hinders all true temperance reform.

As a county Member I must say a word as to the Bill for dealing with the valuation authorities. Long as we have been promised the reform of local taxation, certain as it is that that reform is as necessary as ever it was, there is one step which must be taken before we go into that matter; we do require a strong valuation authority, and we want one basis of valuation in connection with rating. Therefore I welcome the intention of the Government to deal with the matter; first, because it is a crying grievance in itself, and secondly, because I trust it will lead to that further reform of local taxation which is one of the most important subjects of legislation. We in agricultural parts have received a certain form of relief, but it has been only of a temporary character, and when the time comes for a thorough revision of the matter the agricultural interest will again have to ask from the hands of Parliament consideration of their special grievances—grievances which still bear heavily upon them, and which always come more and more into evidence as the burden of local taxation increases.

There is one other matter, and that is the announcement that a Bill is to be brought forward to remove a somewhat curious anomaly which exists in the recollection of Members on the acceptance of office. This is a self-denying ordinance, inasmuch it will not apply to the present Parliament. Doubtless there will be found some persons on the other side who love bye-elections so much that they will object to forego the chance of having one; but surely if the matter is looked into it will be seen that this is a case for reform. Is it not somewhat ludicrous that in the reconstruction of a Ministry the battle should fall not on the leading Ministers, because they change from one office to another without the necessity of seeking re-election, but with the youngest members of the Ministry who, perhaps, have not held office before? In other cases just when Ministers ought to be devoting themselves to the details of their work they are thrown by this necessity into the midst of an election. Then there is the further fact that the requirements of re-election must at times influence the decision of the Prime Minister in selecting the best men he can find to direct the affairs of the country. The whole thing is anomalous and obsolete, and I am very glad that the Government have announced their intention of dealing with it at an early date. There is one thing which I do not notice in the Gracious Speech with which I am personally interested, having been connected with the Committee which sat on the Bill—I mean the Port of London Bill. Although not mentioned in the Speech from the Throne I may remind the House that the Bill still exists, and will come before us again this year. I do trust that another session may not be allowed to elapse before we deal with such an important matter as the port of the greatest city in the world, a measure which is necessary in order that we may regain our commercial supremacy. With regard to the last words of the Address in which His Majesty asks for guidance from on High, I cannot disguise from myself the fact that there are subjects which are not included in His Majesty's Gracious Speech, which have undoubtedly created much controversy in the country and amongst Members of this House. I cannot look around these Benches without noting this fact. Although these words of His Gracious Majesty may appear to be purely formal, yet I feel that there can be no occasion more than the present when this House should more desire some guidance in its great debates, some higher sanction in order that we may still maintain before the face of the world an acknowledgment as the oldest legislative assembly in the world, that we can still carry on our debates in a manner worthy of a great Empire, giving to each other that credit for substantial commonsense which has been the characteristic of our people. I do trust, whatever may be the issue of this controversy, that this House may still deserve to rank amongst the greatest deliberative assemblies in the world. I beg to move.

*MR. PLUMMER (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I rise to second the Motion which has just been so fittingly proposed by the hon. Member for the Ashford Division, and if in so doing, I, like him, do not commence with the customary appeal for the indulgence of the House, it is not because I do not fully recognise my need for such indulgence, but simply because whatever else my experience here may have failed to teach me, it has at any rate taught me that, to those who endeavour to secure the goodwill of their colleagues, the House will always prove to be that friend in need who is, after all, the friend indeed. One is glad, moreover, to remember the sympathy which is extended on these occasions to those called upon to perform a duty which has been described by the Prime Minister—whose absence, I am sure, the whole House regrets—as one of the most difficult and delicate duties which a Member of this House can be called upon to perform. It is, I venture to say, all the more difficult because we are assumed to have special private and privileged information on the one hand, while on the other hand we are "cribbed, cabined, and confined" by those twin tyrants of custom and precedent, which always enter so largely into the debates of this House, and which particularly govern the debate on this Motion, which I have now the honour to second.

One of the rules ordained by custom upon this occasion is a rule which, I think, will meet with general approval, and it is that the mover and the seconder of the debate should, as far as possible, divide the subjects mentioned in His Majesty's Speech, and that the seconder should refrain again, as far as possible, from dealing with those matters which have been dealt with by the mover. I shall, therefore, leave comparatively untouched those subjects which the hon. Member for the Ashford Division has dealt with, and I will pass to other subjects, some of equal importance, and some, possibly, of greater importance. What are sometimes called the foreign relations of this country must ever be of great importance to Parliament and particularly to the House of Commons as being that body upon which constitutionally rests the responsibility of voting those supplies which are inevitably required in the event of any unfortunate interruption of those foreign relations. It must, therefore, be a matter of congratulation to the House and the country that His Majesty is able to assure us of our peaceful relations with foreign Powers. Like the mover of this Motion, I agree that this result is greatly due to those State visits which His Majesty has already paid, and proposes to continue, to the Capitals of Europe, as —may we not say it in a special sense—the Great Ambassador of the Nation. The desire to maintain those peaceful relations is shown in the numerous references in this Speech to arbitration and arbitration treaties. With regard to these I would only make one remark — the hon. Member for the Ashford Division having already dealt with it—and that is that it is an old saying, the truth of which ought never to be overlooked, that "Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war," and whilst to gain a victory in a war which has broken out is no doubt a great thing, to be able honourably and consistently and in accordance with our obligations to the Empire to prevent a war from breaking out is undoubtedly a greater. Unfortunately arbitration is not always possible, and when, as in the case of Somaliland, it has been found necessary to resort to force, it is particularly desirable that the support of this House should go out to those who are fighting amid great difficulties of climate and transport a half civilised foe numerically superior to us. I am sure the sympathies of this House will go out in no less a degree to the relatives of those who have fallen in the recent successful engagement, and particularly to a noble Lord attached to the Party opposite, because they have bravely met their deaths in one of those little wars which are inevitable to this Empire rather than in a great and conspicuous campaign. Sir, such a campaign is unfortunately looming largely in the far East, and I am sure the House will regret the strained relations which at present exist between two great Powers, and will re-echo the hope expressed in the speech that even at the eleventh hour a peaceful solution may be found for the difficulties which now exist. If we turn from the far East to the Near East we find similar cause for concern and anxiety, and though for a time that anxiety has been allayed it is scarcely possible for even the most optimistic observer of recent events to regard it as permanently removed. It is difficult in view of the lessons of experience that have been taught us from that part of the world to express confidence, but the House will observe with satisfaction that in connection with one reform European officers, including officers of the British Army, are to be employed to assist in carrying it out, and we must hope to ensure its performance.

Mr. Plummer.

Now, sir, I turn to a question nearer home; we find a reference in His Majesty's Speech to the danger which is threatening one of the great industries of this country, namely, the cotton industry, in the imperilled supply of that raw material upon which, of course, depends not only the prosperity of that industry, but also the welfare of a large population in Lancashire and elsewhere, which is in turn dependent upon its continued prosperity. I believe the House will welcome the concern expressed in His Majesty's Speech on behalf of a great national industry, and will endorse the hope that by the efforts now being put forward that industry may be placed in a less dependent position upon other countries, and that the position which it now occupies may be considerably relieved. Sir, a self-contained and self-sustained Empire may be but an idle dream or a visionary ideal, but at least it is a worthy ideal, and though it may prove difficult and slow of accomplishment that is no reason why this country should rest content with a greater dependency upon other countries than is absolutely necessary either in this matter of the cotton industry or in other matters.

With regard to the defences of the country the House, I am sure, will welcome any economy that can be effected, provided that it is effected otherwise than at the expense of efficiency, whilst in connection with what has been described as the general problem of Army and War Office reform, I venture to express the hope and belief that the Volunteer Forces will receive that greater support which I am persuaded is the wish of the country generally.

With regard to the promised legislation for the session, the hon. Member for the Ashford Division has largely dealt with it, but he has not referred to one measure, which I am sure the House and the country considers has been delayed too long—I mean the question of alien immigration. However diverse may be our views—and we all know they are very diverse upon that question which, to the detriment of the English language, has come to be described by the classic phrase of "dumping"—I am quite sure none can be found to contend in favour of the continued "dumping" on our shores of pauper and criminal aliens at the expense of the country generally, and too often at the expense of a large number of our fellow-countrymen in our great cities, who find it difficult enough to secure employment in some of the trades effected, at reasonable rates of remuneration and under reasonable conditions of labour.

The other measures referred to in the Address which my colleague has not dealt with are those relating to the Workmen's Compensation Act, the Hours of Employment in Shops, and the Public Health Acts, all of which indicate that what is sometimes called social legislation is to have its due share of the time of the House and that Home questions will not be overlooked amid many pressing Imperial problems. Sir, I have used the phrase "Imperial problems," but I will content myself to-day by adopting the words of the late Sir John Mowbray, who by his many years valued service in this House was well entitled to express the opinion that—

> "The spirit which animates the House of Commons as a body is much the same as it ever has been, namely, a patriotic spirit conscious of the great traditions which it inherits and anxious to work for the good of the Empire."

Sir, the Government have no doubt been the subject of much criticism, but that is the fate of all Governments, and, indeed, of all responsible and not a few irresponsible bodies. It is an old saying that a man must serve his time to every trade, save censure, critics all are ready made; whilst Lord Beaconsfield, who for many years was so conspicuous a figure in this House, used to declare that it was always much easier to be critical than to be correct.

Now it only remains for me to thank the House, and I do so most sincerely, for the patience and attention with which they have listened to what I hope have not been unworthy remarks, and in conclusion, may I add, that in my humble judgment it is well that we should be reminded—lest we forget—well that we should be reminded as we are reminded in His Majesty's Gracious Speech from the Throne, that our deliberations here ought to be carried on with a conscious sense of our obligations to Him who after all is the source of all authority and power, and by whom alone Kings reign and Princes decree justice.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament"—(*Mr. Hardy*).

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling, Burghs): Sir, the first thing that I will say to the House, with the certainty of having with me its full concurrence and sympathy, is to give some expression to the sincere regret with which we note the absence of the Prime Minister, and above all our regret on account of the cause of that absence. We all trust that the cause of his absence will soon disappear, but I think it is peculiarly to be regretted on this particularly occasion because I for one shall find it to be my clear and urgent duty in the course of my remarks to examine into the position of the Government upon that great fiscal question which so largely occupies the attention of the country, and to address to the Government some very plain and direct questions in regard to it. We should have all preferred that we should have the answer to these questions from the Prime Minister's own lips rather than from any other lips, but after all it is not the Prime Minister's policy; it is the policy of the Cabinet, and the Cabinet Minister whom he has deputed to represent him to-night will no doubt be perfectly competent to give us all the information we desire.

I shall not be contradicted when I say that seldom has the opening of a session of Parliament excited such keen interest as that in which we are now taking part. The personal presence of the King, accompanied by His Gracious Consort, is a source of pleasure and satisfaction to all His Majesty's subjects. It enhances the dignity of the occasion, expressing it partly by the imposing ceremony which attends his presence, and it also marks in proper constitutional fashion the high importance of our duties. But when I speak of the interest attaching to our proceedings I do not refer to the form, but to the matter and substance of those proceedings. How we stand is this. In one of the most vital spheres of political opinion and action, a revolutionary movement has been instituted and pursued with zeal, insistency, and profusion during many months, directed against the accepted and established fiscal policy of the country. In fact we are told that there are two policies of departure, and not one only. But while there are some who can detect a difference between the two policies, there are others who maintain that they are in essence implicitly one and the same, that the one is ancillary to the other, and that they are not exempt from the ordinary natural law which controls all terrestrial things, and according to which the whole is greater than its parts, and the greater includes the lesser. Be this as it may, what I am concerned with is the fact that Parliament has never yet had an opportunity—I will not say of discussing this question—we are not nearly that length yet—but of being informed as to the real nature and intention of the two schemes, if there are two. This House sat for three months after the proposed changes were broadly announced, and was never given an opportunity of discussing them. Our Parliamentary information as to the intentions of the Government was confined to two facts—that a statistical inquiry was to be conducted for the benefit of the Cabinet, and that the Prime Minister had no settled convictions. The lack of settled convictions did not appear to be a very good equipment for a Prime Minister who was setting about furnishing a new commercial system for the greatest commercial nation that the world ever saw. But there we were left, and it is only now, at last, after all this time of delay that we have the means of ascertaining the true position of this momentous matter, and the actual intentions in regard to it of the Executive Government, and the whole country waits with anxious curiosity to hear what the Government have to say. But there are one or two subordinate causes of interest at the present time also. We have practically a new Ministry in power. A turn of the wrist has been given, and there has been a kaleidoscopic change on the opposite benches. Familiar faces are found in strange places, and strange faces in familiar places. Is it a new Government? I said practically a new Government. I thought that was safe although not very definite. Is it a new Government with a new policy, or is it the old Government with a new policy? The old Government may be on the Front Bench more or less, but the old policy is mostly on the Back Benches. But then on the Back Benches also is the leader of the new policy, so that I confess I give it up. The situation is too bewildering, and the only way to cure the confusion is to appeal to the common-sense of the electors of the country.

This leads me to another cause of interest at the present moment. We have seen that remarkable array of new Members who took their seats to-day. The hand of death has been heavy upon this House, and we miss the faces of many friends whose places have had to be filled. I hope it will not be thought out of place if I say that beyond this House there is a great loss to note, which the country has had to meet, and which in all of us who are engaged in politics has excited the most sincere regret. I mean the removal from among living men of Lord Salisbury. We on this side often differed, and differed keenly and widely, from Lord Salisbury, but we had long learned to admire, not only his great intellectual endowments, but his high-mindedness, his devotion to duty, and the sound views, let me add, which he strove to act upon in his conduct of the foreign relations of our country. These losses among us have led to what is often spoken of as a general election in miniature, continuing and completing, with hardly any break, the remarkable series of by-elections we have had during the last two years. Where is now the authority of the Government opposite? It is dispersed to the winds; *afflavit populus et dissipati sunt*. From the first we disputed your authority. I will not go back upon the reasons for that. They are known. We maintained from the first that the result of the election of

1900 was a false result, and the facts that we founded that opinion upon were not the mere snarls of disappointed and vanquished combatants. They were facts which now, in the perspective of three years, have commended themselves to all those who look back upon that time. And yet the Government has gone on very gallantly expending the nation's money; plunging the duty and work of education at the instance of one ecclesiastical body —[Cries of "Oh, oh!"]—I do not wish to be contentious, and I withdraw the word instance, and say—for the benefit of one ecclesiastical body; plunging, I say, the work of education into the cauldron of sectarian strife, unsettling many things and settling few. And now the country, in election after election, is knocking at their door. These are the men, Mr. Speaker, with this invalid authority, who would now take upon themselves to remould our whole fiscal policy—not here a part of it and there a part of it, but to alter the whole tone and spirit and intention of it; or who, if they refrain from action, if they have not the courage to make a definite proposal, are using the influence which they accidentally, and, as events are showing, precariously enjoy, which their precarious position gives them, to further schemes which they dare not openly propose. Sir, at this stage, information is what we ask for; and later, before I sit down, I shall recur to this subject, and point out in what respect information is required.

And this is also true of questions which have arisen in many quarters of the world, in the East of Europe, in two parts of Africa, and in two parts of Asia. In all these my task will be, as it has been often since I have held my position—mainly that of interrogating and asking for Papers and claiming, on the part of the House of Commons, and putting forward its right, to be fully informed. I do not remember any time when such serious events have been occurring all over the world with Parliament still in the dark as to their true origin, and as to the part which is being played in our name. Sir, the mover and seconder have—and I think this will be the general opinion—discharged their duty in a manner which redounds to their credit. They have spoken with force and ease and have avoided any undesirable disclosures while rambling round a great many subjects. That, after all, is the principal duty of the mover and seconder of the Address. On this occasion that, I think, the hon. Members opposite have fully accomplished. [Cries of "Oh, Oh" and "Order."] I do not wish to speak disparagingly of the hon. Gentlemen mentioned, but in their praise. I have known, in my time, very indiscreet speeches made by hon. Members in moving and seconding the Address, and that certainly has not been the case on this occasion. Now, the first part of the King's Speech we all listened to with unmixed pleasure and satisfaction. We may all congratulate ourselves on the conclusion of a treaty of arbitration with France and the prospect of similar treaties with other countries. Even more important than these actual instruments between the countries is the spirit of mutual friendship and good understanding which has been established with the chief European nations, the creation and maintenance of which has been largely the noble and worthy work of His Majesty the King, who has not only served the best interests of his own country, but has also set a good example to us all, to all his subjects; and besides that has earned our gratitude and the gratitude of Europe. The visits of the President of the French Republic and of the King and Queen of Italy—the latter visit oddly enough not mentioned in this Address—have done much to cement good relations; and I think it was quite proper that some allusion should be made to those civilities which have been exchanged between the members of the Legislative Chambers of Paris and London, and which have given pleasure to the Members themselves and gratification to both the peoples.

There are other quarters of the world where the outlook is not by any means so cheerful. The situation of affairs between Russia and Japan is so critical that I think it wisest and most in accordance with my duty to refrain from any comment at all. Papers will, no doubt, be laid, and then we shall know what has been done in our name, and also what the grounds of the dispute really and actually are, of which we have no authentic knowledge at present. I trust that they will show that no effort has been spared in the past, and that the good intention and good will of this country is not confined to the future, as the wording of the Address might almost seem to convey. Turning to the deplorable story of Macedonia, I would recognise the benevolent part taken by Lord Lansdowne in instituting and supporting measures of reform and relief in that country. The first scheme of reform put forward early last year altogether failed. The second was accepted in form by the Turks in the autumn, but it may be so delayed and thwarted as to be really ineffective; and the news we have is far from reassuring. At the present there is universal suffering and discontent and suspicion, and the general expectation is that the insurrection will break out again in spring. Sir, I hope the Papers will show that the Government of this country has pursued a strong and definite policy, and that they always bear in mind the peculiar degree of responsibility in which we of this country stand towards the victims of Turkish misgovernment. But even if the Government were to be unmindful of that, the country is not unmindful of it; and it looks to the Government to leave nothing undone for the aid of this unhappy people.

Two military undertakings require notice. There is the little war in Somaliland, which has been so unduly costly in life, and which, to the outward view, does not appear to be very much advanced after all from what it was at this time last year, when I was asking the same sort of question and making the same sort of review. What everybody asks is this—"What are we doing there at all? What do we want and expect to gain by interfering with the interior of that country when our interest is confined to a portion of the coast?" Shall we never be able to curb the zeal—the patriotic and praiseworthy zeal—of the man on the spot? And shall we always continue the evil habit we have acquired of treating contemptuously everyone who opposes us, and setting down every man who stands out against us as being mad, and denouncing as Dervishes all who, after all, do not like an invasion of human imports into their own country? The other case, Mr. Speaker, is that of Thibet. Papers are greatly called for here, and until we receive them, again I say, we can hardly judge of the case. We are sending a large force in mid-winter into a country, perhaps the most inhospitable on the face of the earth—a country also which is of all least accessible from the quarter from which we apparently suspect danger. We hold that a case which justifies such action would need to be a strong one, but in our present ignorance of it, as I have said, we cannot judge it.

Sir, since the House rose, the Report of the Commission on the War has been issued, and I think the universal opinion of the country gives the highest credit to Lord Elgin and his colleagues for the manner in which that inquiry was conducted. The Report contains much that is startling, and much that is instructive, and well deserves the public attention that has been given to it. And now, yesterday, we were able to read in the papers the recommendations of the small Committee of eminent and capable men who have been inquiring into the organisation and administration of the War Office. Well, these recommendations must be quietly and carefully scrutinised. There is general agreement everywhere as to the creation of an Army Board, or an Army Council, to give the Secretary of State for War the best military advice in the best form. But as one who has long held that view—I have tried myself, with my own hand, the forming of such a council—I welcome that step in advance. The principle is sound; and the precise form which the council is to take, and the details of its composition and work, can easily be adjusted. But one thing which I should like to say and to impress on the House is this: by far more important than any form or system of administration is the maintenance of loyalty, good feeling, and confidence between the Secretary of State, the civilians at the War Office, and the military men at the War Office, and among these different classes I have just named, themselves. That is the secret of the whole position. I would not go so far as to say that "Whate'er is best administered is best," but certainly the most important thing of all is that, whether you have a board or council, or whatever you have, it should be such as to encourage that spirit I have mentioned.

With regard to the Army itself it is difficult to know how it stands. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State, who has been so persistent and acute a critic, has now taken it in hand to administer and build up. Perhaps he may discover from the inside real difficulties which when he viewed the matter from the outside seemed to him imaginary. I can only hope that he may succeed in combining all that was good in the old system with all the advantages he is going to confer upon us under the new system. He tells us that he sees what ought to be done—in which he is exceptionally fortunate—but he asks for time. Let me assure him—and I think I may do so in the name of the House and the country—that we shall not be impatient; because we know that he deserves consideration from the House of Commons, which fully appreciates his earnestness of purpose and his assiduity and intelligence.

Now I wish to call attention to one of the most singular facts in connection with the Speech—namely, that no reference whatever is made in it to South Africa. Is, then, that country so quiet, so prosperous, its people so contented, its finances so flourishing, that there is no occasion to refer to it? I am afraid that the truth gets through to us with great difficulty from South Africa; but we know enough to be aware that it would be almost true to say that the exact contrary of all this is the case. The promises and expectations of past years, even of last year, have been disappointed. But the outstanding question for the moment, which drawfs all others, is the question of the importation of Chinese labour into the Transvaal. A week or two ago I wrote to the Prime Minister to ask him whether he did not agree that there should be no definite or final step taken by the Government either on the spot or at home in this matter until Parliament had an opportunity of considering the question. He has not favoured me with any answer to my letter; but I saw the other day that the Colonial Secretary stated in a speech or a letter that an opportunity would be given to the House, and nothing would be done until that opportunity had been used. Therefore I would now venture to ask the Government, in the first place, that all the Papers connected with this subject should be presented to us as speedily as possible, including the Report of the Labour Commission, and the ordinance itself, and all other documents relating to the question; and then, when hon. Members have seen and had an opportunity of considering all these documents, a day should be given for the discussion of the question. That is the only satisfactory way in which we can deal with it, and I think it is a fair and reasonable claim to make. In that case I would advise hon. friends of my own who are anxious to move an Amendment or Amendments to the Address on this subject not to do so on the understanding that the opportunity I have spoken of should be given us in the future. I will not discuss, therefore, to-day the question itself; but I will only say this, and dwell upon it for a little time, because I think it is an important matter that the House should say clearly—and I believe it will attract a large degree of agreement—that the inhabitants of the colony ought not to be committed to a line of action which must irrevocably affect their future without their undoubted and express assent. Now what the Colonial Secretary says is—

> "The policy of the Government is to treat the Transvaal as though it were a self-governing colony, unless a distinctly Imperial interest is concerned."

Putting aside that question, and supposing the importation of indentured Chinese labour is not an Imperial question—which is a large assumption, if we have regard to the doctrines affecting trade and labour which are now in circulation—how on earth is a Crown colony to be treated as a self-governing community? I much prefer the words of the late Colonial Secretary on this point, because he said he had informed Lord Milner that—

> "Before I assented to any introduction of Asiatic labour, whether Chinese or Indian, I

> must have reasonable proof that it was a policy which the Transvaal, if a self-governing colony, would approve."

This puts it very much better, above all when we are dealing with a Crown colony of the type of the Transvaal. It has a Governor and a hierarchy of officials; it has a council to assist the Governor composed of fifteen officials and nine nominative members. But besides that, consider the laws which are in force in that colony—under which any man whose act or word is unpalatable to the Government can be deported out of it without being tried. How can you say that you have freedom of opinion in these circumstances? Every man carries on his business or employment at the mercy of the Government—the tender mercy, I hope and believe—but still he does not enjoy full independence, especially in a matter like this, on which the Government may have taken a particular line. That is the country which is said to be treated as self-governing. It is said in the newspapers that there has been a sort of *referendum*. I have read also that a *referendum* has been refused, and that what has happened is merely that a certain memorial has been put out under the auspices of a committee who are anxious for this importation. But under those influences to which I have referred I do not think the signatures to such a memorial are of great value as an indication of the genuine feeling of the inhabitants of the colony. Therefore the conclusion I come to is that, so long as these colonies are Crown colonies, so long the responsibility of governing rests upon the Imperial Government and the Imperial Parliament, the use of Chinese labour is therefore a matter for us to consider. It is not merely that we are in an offhand way, after a casual debate, to approve or disapprove of it. It is on us the responsibility in this matter rests, and we can only judge of it when the opportunity is given to us. I am content to leave the merits of the question to the promised opportunity. I trust that in the course of this debate a statement will be made as to the financial position in South Africa, as to the instalment of £10,000,000 in the loan of £30,000,000, and as to the progress and work of repatriation and compensation, for which the House has sanctioned the expenditure of huge sums of money.

I turn to the domestic programme. The first and most obvious remark is that so meagre a list has seldom been submitted to a Parliament. The only conclusion we can come to is that the Government do not anticipate a very long or protracted session. The Government are going to stop or to control alien immigration, to the great delight of the hon. and gallant Member for Central Sheffield. It is a curious coincidence that, just at the time when it is proposed to introduce Chinamen into one of our colonies with the effect of ousting from employment our own countrymen who live there, a Bill is to be introduced by the Government to prevent the immigration of foreigners into this country because of their undue competition in labour. Another very curious fact is that a large proportion of these destitute aliens whom it is desirable to keep out of this country come from the very high-tariff countries in which we are told the workmen are so much more happy and prosperous than here. This is a Bill which we must see before we say anything about it. Then there is to be a Licensing Bill. All I would say of that is, that any restriction on the discretionary power of the magistrates will be hotly and pertinaciously resisted. I turn to a more sentimental question with me, that of Scottish education. I trust that whatever the right hon. Gentleman does will be done in harmony with Scottish traditions and providing amply for popular control. But I must confess to the House that I am subject to a most improper sentiment in regard to this matter, because I have great confidence, which I ought not to have, in the right hon. Gentleman whom I am glad to see, and every one is glad to see, in the position of the Secretary for Scotland. He is a real Scotchman; he knows Scotchmen and is known of them; and I hope also, apart from his own very proper and wise intuitions, he will take counsel with the Scottish members; and I would particularly advise him to take counsel with the four Scottish Members who have been returned to the House during the last year, who from their fresh contact with the people must know more about the subject than some of us.

There is to be no English Education Bill. There were rumours in the newspapers, as usual wrong, to indicate that there was to be. Sir, there will be no peace or success until those parts of this new system of education are removed which infringe the rights and hurt the consciences of large masses of the people.

Now at last I come back to this great fiscal question, which, like the subject of South Africa, is, in the old phrase, made conspicuous by its absence from the Speech. In the past history of this controversy, what are the salient facts? One fine day in May the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham breaks loose, declares against free trade and in favour of preference with a tax on food. He comes to the House, and, having apparently consulted nobody, makes a great declaration of policy. Then he waits to see what will happen. This was an unusual way for a Minister to proceed. If a Minister has a policy to propose he generally goes to the Cabinet first. If he dissents from a policy, and tells the House that it is so, he resigns. The right hon. Gentleman did neither. The next thing would have been respectfully to invite him to resign. I have been looking up the text-books on this question, and I find that this is how it is laid down—

> "If a Minister differs from his colleagues he must resign or else he must be held responsible for their action. He cannot be allowed, like Lord Camden, to retain office and the emoluments of office, and afterwards repudiate the action of those with whom he has been associated."

Again, it is said—

> "The Prime Minister must manage as well as rule his subordinates. When we say that a Prime Minister can dismiss a colleague we mean no more than this—that a strong Premier can say to the Queen, 'He or I must go.'"

That is the state of the law as laid down in Sir William Anson's "Law and Customs of the Constitution." Fortunately for the right hon. Gentleman, if not for Parliament and the country, an extraordinary conjunction of favouring circumstances awaited him. He discovered, in the first place, that on this question of the reversal of the fiscal policy of the country and of the constitutional relations and the fiscal relations of the Empire, the Prime Minister possessed no settled convictions. That was a most auspicious discovery for him. Then the question arose in the Cabinet—How are we to meet Parliament and conduct affairs of State with a Prime Minister who has no policy, and a Colonial Secretary who has a policy of his own and who will not keep quiet with it? Here, again, see how fortune favoured the right hon. Gentleman. The Cabinet decided to treat the question as an open one, on which their lips were sealed, and if they could have compassed it they would have liked to seal the lips of the House of Commons as well; and as an apt, candid, and correct description of this resolve they agreed to come here and tell us that a solemn inquiry, in which the whole nation was invited sympathetically to take part, was to be undertaken—an inquiry which, as they hinted, only the blind partisan or the intolerant fanatic could fail to respect. Meanwhile, outside, not a word was to be said. That leaflets covered the country under the auspices of one of the Ministers, did not matter. We know now that a Cabinet crisis was raging the whole of this time; and what I now say is that the whole thing was one of the greatest impostures ever foisted upon Parliament and the country. The climax came in September, when the Government was remodelled. I should have had a great deal to say if the Prime Minister had been present as to the part which he played in this matter; but in his absence I prefer not to make any personal allusions to his conduct, because he is not here to speak for himself. Perhaps we shall have some other opportunity. Well, now our turn for inquiry has come. I notice that some members of the Government, by the way, have been saying how delightful it is that now at last the opponents in this quarrel will speak in each other's presence in the House of Commons. I should have thought that members of the Government were the very last persons to like that condition of things, because they have been for months taking different lines on this subject, some ardent and staunch for free food, and others extreme preferentialists; and it will be very awkward for them to get up one after another in a debate. We may also have some sympathy with any one, if such there be, whose method of controversy leads him to use impressive but untenable arguments, garnished with startling but inaccurate statistics, and when the argument is refuted and the errors are exposed to take no account of the correction but go on repeating them. We may imagine how such a one in this House will sigh for the sweet insulation, immunity, and autocracy of the platform. Now the larger policy, which has been so clearly expounded with so much energy, and, let me add, with so much variety, by the right hon. Gentleman the late Colonial Secretary—that is a clearly intelligible policy. The plan has been greatly altered from time to time; that one would have expected from the natural adaptability of its author; but it is always clear. But my questions to-night refer, not to the policy of the right hon. Gentleman, but to the policy of the Executive Government opposite, and on a future occasion in this debate my right hon. friend the Member for Montrose will move an Amendment which will raise both these questions, and include, in fact, the whole subject. He would have moved this Amendment immediately, or as soon as convenient, in this debate, but out of consideration for the fact that the Prime Minister is necessarily absent it has been arranged that he should defer his Motion.

The great advantage of this movement is that the House and the country can find out now what the Government really means. The difficulty of appreciating their position has two main causes. In the first place, the extreme vagueness of the Prime Minister and others in their statement of the official policy; and, secondly, uncertainty as to its real and avowed relation with the major, and unofficial or *quasi*-official policy. This Government policy of retaliation has never got beyond the stage of phrases and generalities and formulas. These are no good at all. You can discuss retaliation and reciprocity and freedom to resume negotiations in the abstract for months, and get no further. As far as we can understand it, there is to be some method of dealing with outrageously unfair competition. The dumper is to be come down upon when his commodity is too cheap, and the foreign tariff is to be taken in hand when it is too high. How are you going to do it? The whole thing turns upon that. We do not know. The inquiry has taught us nothing. There is not a single case in the concrete except the Sugar Convention, and there the result is not encouraging. In the first place it was hoped that it would help West Indian sugar. But notwithstanding four months of Protection, the imports have fallen off in a year nearly by one half. Also the Indian tea trade has been retaliated upon by Russia, as the penalty of excluding her sugar from our ports. So far as it goes, the experience suggests that blows may be delivered very much at random—sometimes you may hit yourself, and sometimes you may hit the wrong man. The Government should come down from the clouds and tell us what are the machinery and procedure that they contemplate. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon — it requires a lesson in geography to describe these retired Cabinet Ministers—in his letter of resignation complained very properly of having been kept in the dark. He wrote—

> "I would gladly give consideration to any practicable scheme for obtaining access to foreign markets or for meeting evils of which we complain; but we have had no scheme placed before us."

Let us see your practicable scheme. But there are some points on which explicit information can be given. This retaliatory policy, does it mean Parliamentary or merely Executive action? Is it intended that Parliament—that this House especially, with its power over its own duties—should hand them over to the Executive to impose or alter as it chooses? If that is intended, then I am afraid that is a very wide issue, and one quite apart from the question of tariffs and duties. This must be made quite clear. As to the procedure in the case of dumping, I would ask, is there to be a sliding scale of tariffs regulated by the price of imports, or is it to be simple prohibition, as under the Sugar Convention? Then, again, how is this thing to be worked as a defence against foreign tariffs? Other countries go into commercial negotiations with a full tariff, sometimes with two scales, a higher and a lower, according as they are met by the other country. But this country always obtains entrance under the lowest scale. We are not to have a full tariff. How then are we to proceed? Supposing the United States is said to be shutting out Bradford woollen goods, or Russia shutting out bleaching powder, and there appear to be grounds for taking action. The Government have, no doubt, thought out the line of action. They have thought of the imports on which retaliation in those two cases might take effect; the consequences to traders and consumers, who are in no way responsible for any high tariff, but who will nevertheless be pawns in the game. Have they reflected that some traders may secure protection by a side wind, and that others are bound to suffer from restriction? Do they realise all the confusion, all the clamour for protection from other trades, and the difficulty of abolishing a tariff, established for retaliatory purposes, when that purpose has been secured? Have they considered the case of those protected countries, where, if we are to retaliate at all, it must be upon either food or raw material? Well, those are a few of the points which want elucidation from the Government. Some of us have asked about it in the country, and we want to know what the Government's plan is. It is only by considering these practical questions that we can come to a right conclusion. The answer to them will show the country whether, quite apart from high theory and principle, the policy of retaliation is a practicable policy; and they ought to have been cleared up before the Government assumed to themselves the title to reverse, annul, and delete at their pleasure the principles upon which the fiscal policy of the country is based. Again, there is some doubt—and to this point I would invite the attention of the House—as to whether this policy, this formula, is to be put into operation, or whether it is meant only for show. But it must be a real policy, because we have had the resignation of Ministers on it; and the precedent of the Sugar Convention bears substantial testimony to the reality of what is certainly in itself a somewhat flimsy-looking thing to be called a policy. Besides, I hope the House will notice this. What did the Prime Minister say in his letter to the Duke of Devonshire, written, if one may judge from external evidence, under circumstances of some tension? He said this—

> "I see no difficulty in successfully carrying out the policy which for a fortnight you were ready to accept, by the help of the Administration which for a fortnight you aided me to reconstruct."

Surely the charm of this balanced sarcasm can hardly have carried the Prime Minister out of his depth and induced him to make an admission which he did not intend. He, at least, could see how it can be done. He says—

> "I see no difficulty in successfully carrying out the policy,"

and he contemplates this Administration doing it. But here we only get another contradiction and anomaly. Here is the President of the Board of Trade. He opened to us the most—I will not say charming vista; ugly vista, possibly, according to our ideas, of years and years, Parliament after Parliament—a perfect ladder of Parliaments up which we are to climb before we attain Protection, and therefore there was no harm done by whatever people said now. The country would not be committed until all these years are over. But here is the Prime Minister, on the other hand, implying that it is a thing on purpose for which the present Government has been reconstructed. It has renewed its youth for the express purpose of putting into effect a given policy. Well, then, why is that policy not mentioned in the King's Speech? If you can palliate the blows of the foreign plunderers, why do you not do it, and would it not be a much better thing to do, after all, from your point of view—I do not want to do it—than to deal with the drink trade, which is neither a languishing nor a slaughtered industry, and to which you are going to give another dose of protection?

The second point on which we seek light is the relation between the minor and the major, the official and the *quasi*-official policy. We have documentary evidence as to the origin of what may be called the co-ordinated policy. It occurs in the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham's letter of resignation. He says—

> "I suggest that you should limit the present policy of the Government to the assertion of

our freedom in the case of all commercial relations with foreign countries, and that you should agree to my tendering my resignation of my present office to His Majesty and devoting myself to the work of explaining and popularising those principles of Imperial union which my experience has convinced me are essential to our future welfare and prosperity."

Which are the most important and significant and characteristic and illuminating words of that passage? The first two, "I suggest." So that this halfway house does not mark the natural limit to which the Prime Minister and the Government would go, it is an artificial structure suggested by the late Colonial Secretary to calm the fears of the nation, and to preserve a safe appearance and cover up the ultimate designs. To this suggestion the Prime Minister, with the utmost docility, agreed; and as he explained in his further letter—although he did not explain it, as it would appear, to the uninitiated members of his Cabinet—he and the Government accepted the duty imposed upon them, and agreed that the work should be specialised. What does the difference between the two amount to after all? It is but a pure matter of expediency. At heart they were united about the preferential policy, and they both felt that the times were not ripe for imposing the food taxes which alone could give effect to it. The whole transaction has the look of a mere affair of Party accommodation. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet were to remain at the base until the moment came for a general advance, while the late Colonial Secretary moved forward to survey the field, maintaining his lines of communication. That seems to have been the understanding; and colour is given to it by the proceedings of Ministers themselves in their subsequent speeches, and, above all, by the presence at the Treasury and in the Cabinet of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who accepts the Birmingham policy in all its branches. Now we are left asking why did the late Colonial Secretary resign at all? He would have been quite comfortable in his old place. Half the Ministry have declared for him. Look at the President of the Local Government Board. He is never weary of proclaiming his adhesion to the right hon. Gentleman. He supports a Tariff Reform League candidate in Wiltshire, against a Conservative free trader. Why, any day another letter may come "suggesting" that the time is ripe for the Member for West Birmingham to take formal command of the position that he dominates from the outside. Any day the signal may be given for a move forward from the trenches and the abandonment, bag and baggage, of the makeshift policy. What wonder if we regard the declared policy of His Majesty's Government as a mere *hors d'œuvre*, as trumpery as it is indigestible, to whet the appetite for bigger dishes—a mere *lever de rideau*, designed to prepare the minds of the audience for the full five-act tragedy of protection? Why, Sir, I come to *The Times* of to-day, to the political weather prophet of *The Times* of to-day—we always read his prophecies, although we do not always agree with them—he says—

"That a General Election may be looked for"—

this is accidental on this subject—

"at no distant date may be inferred, from the preparations for the conflict which are being made by both Unionists and Liberals. So far as the Government are concerned, there appears to be no desire to precipitate affairs until—"

until what?

"until Mr. Chamberlain's Tariff Commission has completed its Report."

Sir, what I say is, that the time has come for clearing up the situation. That is why I take the very first moment open to me, avoiding as much as possible personal references to the Prime Minister, as I have said, but dealing with the Government as a Government. After all, it is not a one-man Government. I do not know how many men are in it; and we are entitled to plain answers to plain questions. Let me, in one or two sentences, recapitulate. We want to know, in the first place, something more as to the character of the declared policy, and the time and manner of its coming into operation; and with regard to the larger policy we want to know whether, severally and collectively, the Government associate themselves with it, or disassociate themselves from it. There are preferential duties, and there are the taxes on food. Yes, but there are also the ten per cent. protective taxes on manufactures. We have never had an authoritative announcement from the Government of the light in which they view that part of the proposal, which, if I may say so, has, like Aaron's rod, eaten up the rest in the recent course of this discussion. The Government and its members have spoken with two voices long enough, and it is high time that they should put themselves in order before Parliament and the country by reverting to the theory of Ministerial responsibility and utterance with which we are familiar. That is all I am going to say, and I thank the House for listening to me on this great question. If I have spoken at length it is because I wish to bring the whole of the matter of inquiry fully before the House.

But now I will trouble the House only with one or two sentences on another subject, and it is the supreme importance of it which must be my excuse. It is a subject in which I suspect may be found at once the key and the cause and the cure of any real uneasiness that exists as to fiscal policy, and as to the condition of trade. What is causing serious embarrassment to the country, and bringing, more perhaps than anything else, discredit to the Administration, is the difficulty of finding the money to carry out the policy to which they have committed the country. We cannot expect any sudden relief from taxation, for they have spent and borrowed and taxed and committed the taxpayers during these prosperous years for some time to come. If lean years are before us, the expenditure of these vast sums of money is at once in a great degree the cause of them, and has largely increased the difficulties attending them. And, unfortunately, much of the expenditure to which we are committed is of a progressive nature; and here is a point I would urge upon the House. It is a point which is within my memory and the memory of those much younger Members of the House than I am. The grip of the spending services over the expenditure has greatly gained of late years on the control of Parliament and the Executive. Some of the most taking administrative schemes which have been put forward, whatever their merits may be, have the secondary effect—I mean schemes for organisation, or for increasing the facility of managing those Departments — have the secondary effect, if it is right to call it secondary, of weakening Departmental responsibility as well as Parliamentary control. In the Address there is a little ray of hope—oh, such a little one—through a narrow chink. It says—

> "The possibility of diminishing the burden is being carefully considered."

They have got to the stage of consideration! Why, the stage of action ought to have begun long ago. Consideration, however, is, at least, an improvement on last year. If I remember rightly, the Government then mentioned this great and growing expenditure without a word of indication of any means being taken to stop it. What is wanted—and to this I would invite the assistance of all Members of the House on both sides, for this is surely not a Party question—is to direct public attention to this vital matter, and that this House and the Executive alike should set their faces towards frugal administration and the reduction of taxation, satisfied that nothing will bring greater advantage to the national industries and the welfare and happiness of the people.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): In the unfortunate absence of the Prime Minister, the responsibility has been imposed upon me of discharging the task which he would naturally have discharged of replying to the questions which the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition has just addressed to His Majesty's Government. Let me, in the first place, thank the right hon. Gentleman, on behalf of my friends on this side of the House, for the reference which he made to the Prime Minister's illness. His absence from the House, still more the cause of it, is, I am sure, universally regretted. His scrupulous fairness to opponents, his constant courtesy to all, have endeared him to friends and opponents alike. My next duty is to discharge the task, which no one would have performed more gracefully than the Prime Minister himself, of complimenting my hon. friends the mover and seconder of the Address on the success with which they achieved what is, I believe, one of the most difficult tasks that can be imposed upon any Member of this House. They brought to bear upon it a tact, a consideration for the feelings of the House, an avoidance of controversy in dealing with controversial subjects, and a knowledge of the subjects they treated which, I think, make their speeches memorable even among those delivered on these occasions.

As regards at any rate, the opening paragraphs of His Majesty's Speech we are all at one. We note with gratification the reference which is here made to the cordial relations established by recent Royal visits, and fostered by subsequent international civilities between ourselves and the neighbouring Republic, and between ourselves and other nations. I think the whole country feels that we are indebted in a very special manner to His Majesty for the part he played, to use the fine phrase which has been applied to him, as a great Ambassador taking upon himself a mission of peace and goodwill towards our neighbours.

The right hon. Gentleman referred to the serious state of affairs now existing in the Far East, and said that he felt that in the complicated situation before us he had better make no comment on what was proceeding. I think I shall do well to follow his example. This is not a moment at which I think I could usefully say anything upon this subject, nor is it a moment at which His Majesty's Government have to lay Papers before the House. There will be no desire to withhold information from the House when the moment at which it can be given comes; but, for reasons which I need not mention, I think the House will see that the present is not a suitable moment for the presentation of information to Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman expressed the hope that Papers would be laid on the subject of Macedonia, and that when they were presented it would be found that His Majesty's Government had acted with a due sense of their responsibilities to the people of that unhappy country, and had used their influence to promote the scheme of reform which it is known the Powers have been pressing upon the Porte's acceptance. I understand that a Blue-book on this subject is being prepared and will be laid before the House. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman and the House that when they see that Blue-book they will find that the efforts of His Majesty's Government have been uniformly exerted to the best of their ability to impress upon the Porte the urgent need for reform, and to promote such an amelioration in the administration of the country as may remove the evils under which it has suffered. We have felt that in so doing we could best act in concert with and through those two Great Powers who are most immediately interested, and who from their geographical position have the best opportunities for carrying these reforms into execution. I am glad to think that some progress is being made, and the right hon. Gentleman may rest assured that we shall be wanting in no endeavour in order to increase it and secure relief for that country. I am bound to pass rapidly over these important matters.

The right hon. Gentleman made some inquiry about Somaliland, and the remarks he made seemed to show a very imperfect acquaintance with the circumstances which have led to the present operations. He appeared to regard them as an unprovoked attack on the part of His Majesty's Government upon a deserving ruler in rightful possession of the country, who was only anxious to prevent the dumping of foreign populations—I think that was the right hon. Gentleman's phrase.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: An invasion of human imports.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Who was only anxious to prevent an invasion of human imports into his territory. That is not history. It does not bear the remotest resemblance to it. There are certain tribes in the neighbourhood whom we have undertaken to protect as long as they live in peace and amity with us, and it was not our human invasion of this peaceful potentate's dominions, but his attack on these protected tribes which forced His Majesty's Government to act. Let me say that no one could regret the necessity for that action more than His Majesty's Government. We did not enter into an undertaking of this kind with a light heart; we knew the enormous difficulties which the character of the country imposed upon any military operations. We would gladly have remained within our own territory if we could have secured those to whom our protection was due. That was not possible. We have learned by bitter experience that you cannot afford to allow one of these fanatical Mahomedan Powers suddenly to spring into existence and obtain great proportions in these territories. We felt that we were bound, both for the immediate protection of those under our care and for the future safety of that portion of the world, to take steps to crush the Mullah's power. I trust that the brilliant successes gained by General Egerton in this campaign—which is one of extraordinary difficulty—have greatly advanced the objects which we have in view, and I hope when the operations in which he is now engaged are concluded he will have obtained complete success, and that we shall be able to retire again within our own boundaries.

The right hon. Gentleman asked for some information about Thibet. My right hon. friend the Secretary of State for India has prepared Papers, and they will be laid before Parliament in the course of the next few days. In the meantime, let me say that this political mission hardly, I think, justifies the language in which the right hon. Gentleman has spoken of it. The Government of India has been singularly patient in its dealings with Thibet. For years we have been subjected to difficulties with that country, culminating in infractions of the frontier of Sikkim, a protected State, and in the return unopened or unanswered of communications which the Viceroy addressed to the Dalai Lama. In regard to these matters of complaint, and with the concurrence of the Chinese Government, this mission entered Thibetan territory. There has been great and unfortunate delay in the arrival of the Chinese representative, who, with the representatives of the Thibetan Power, was to meet our representative. I hope that he will hasten his arrival, and that we may yet attain the objects of the mission—a peaceful settlement of our trade relations, the protection and maintenance of our undoubted Treaty rights with that country, and an agreement as to the proper boundary between that country and Sikkim. I think I have traversed over the questions of foreign affairs to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded.

As regards South Africa, the importance of the questions which are there arising is recognised fully by the Government. The right hon. Gentleman asks—as is usual and very necessary on these occasions in order that the House may be able to form a judgment—for Papers. I hope that these Papers will be circulated to-morrow in time for any discussion which hon. Members think desirable. I think the Report of the Labour Commission is what the right hon. Gentleman asked for.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Will the papers contain the evidence given before the Labour Commission, which is most necessary?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, I am afraid not. The Report is what was asked for before.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In talking of the Report of a Commission we usually include in that phrase the evidence, which in this case is most necessary.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have not made myself familiar with the evidence, which, I understand, fills a bulky volume. On that matter perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will communicate with the Colonial Secretary. The Papers to be circulated to-morrow will give very full information as to the labour difficulties and as to what has taken place, and will, I think, include all that the right hon. Gentleman has asked for specifically.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: —Will they include the debates in the Legislative Council?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes. The right hon. Gentleman also made some reference to the financial position of the Transvaal. It is true that the progress of the Transvaal towards prosperity has not been as rapid as we had hoped and believed would be the case. I should have thought that was not a matter for congratulation.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I did not say it was a matter for congratulation. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of what the Government "believed," and I said "Hear, hear."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I was not aware that the hon. Gentleman said anything at all. My remark had no reference to him; if he chooses to apply it I can have no objection. I was saying I thought it would not be a subject of congratulation or jubilation in any quarter of the House. After all, it is upon the people of the Transvaal that any temporary distress or any postponement of the return of prosperity first falls, and whatever be our view as to events which are past, we must all desire that the healing effects of prosperity may make themselves felt in that country as soon as possible.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Chinese labour!

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: In the meantime it is, of course, the case that, having regard to the situation of the finances of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony at the present time, and to the position of our own money market, His Majesty's Government have come to the conclusion that this is not a proper time at which to raise the first instalment of the War Contribution Loan.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, N.): Hear, hear.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The right hon. Gentleman cheers that sentiment. I am well aware that it is one of his most cherished convictions that under no circumstances shall we ever receive any contribution from the Transvaal on account of the war. I differ from him. I see no attempt on the part of the people of the Transvaal to escape from the obligation which they are under, and I am confident that at the first moment when either they or we think that the operation can be successfully and properly carried out they will be anxious to take the share which they undertook to take in the expenses of that war. As regards repatriation, I may say the work has been most successfully concluded. As regards compensation, I think the right hon. Gentleman must formulate in more definite terms the question which he wishes to put Now I turn to the more controversial part of the right hon. Gentleman's observations. His speech was, indeed, of a peculiar character. I do not remember ever to have heard a speech from the Leader of the Opposition on an occasion of this kind of such a character as that which the right hon. Gentleman has thought it right to make.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There never was such an occasion.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I confess I think the speech bore traces of that change which the right hon. Gentleman himself indicated in that he had intended to attack the Prime Minister warmly, but that in his absence he omitted his name from a large portion of his remarks. What was the result? Instead of addressing himself in the main to the policy of His Majesty's Government, or to the conduct of the Prime Minister or his colleagues, the right hon. Gentleman delivered an attack upon my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham. He very generously and kindly substituted the name of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham, who is present to defend himself, for the name of the Prime Minister, who is unable to be present. Yet the right hon. Gentleman says that these are different policies.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: They profess to be.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I was talking about persons for the moment, not policies. I say that a large portion of the right hon. Gentleman's speech dealing with this matter was devoted to an attack upon the Member for West Birmingham—to his conduct first in remaining in the Government and then in going out of it—and not upon the policy of the Government at all. I think that is a very extraordinary and unusual proceeding. I am not aware that there is any precedent for interrogating a gentleman who is no longer a member of the Government as to the course he intends to pursue. As regards the Government, what is the right hon. Gentleman's complaint? He complains that the House of Commons has had no opportunity of discussing this question; that during all last session they were silent. I thought we had several debates. But if we did not have the question more definitely and directly put before us, whose fault was that? The Prime Minister, on behalf of the Government, again and again offered the right hon. Gentleman a day for any Motion of Censure upon the course which the Government took which the right hon. Gentleman could find the courage to produce. The Motion was never produced, and we still await that Motion, which we are now informed will be moved in the course of the next few days. The right hon. Gentleman alleges that the Government has no business, as I understand him, to continue in office. He challenges us to at once take the decision of the electorate on this subject. He denies our competence to frame any policy, or our representative capacity. Yes, but he took exactly the same line previous to the election of 1900. He and his friends of the Opposition repeatedly in this House challenged our representative capacity before that election, and invited us to go to the electors for their verdict. We went to the electors; we took their verdict. [Mr. Dalziel: You said the war was over then.] The Leader of the Opposition has ever since been trying to find some reason to explain that the electors did not mean what they said upon that occasion. The appeal to the electors on our policy will come in good time. In the meantime, I think the right hon. Gentleman should make up his mind exactly as to what line of attack he wishes to adopt. He says we are shrinking from an appeal to the electors. If that be so, why does he and other gentlemen opposite accuse us of attempting to rush a verdict without due consideration? He cannot have it both ways, he must choose one accusation or the other. If I might venture to say so, it is desirable, if possible, that at any rate the leading Members of the Opposition should agree upon the same line of argument. In the absence of the Prime Minister I am not going to deal with the history of what happened in the Cabinet. I have no authority to do so; and I understood the right hon. Gentleman himself to wish to reserve that question until the Prime Minister is in a position to be present. But this I say, and I say it without fear of contradiction, that no man was ever more loyal to his colleagues, no man was ever more generous to his supporters, than the present Prime Minister, and whatever misunderstanding may have arisen, none of those who served with him will ever accuse him of having wilfully or deliberately deceived them.

The right hon. Gentleman passed from his fancy picture of Cabinet proceedings to a series of interrogations as to what the policy of His Majesty's Government was. That policy has been explicitly and clearly stated by the only man entitled to pronounce as to the policy of the Government—by the Prime Minister himself. The right hon. Gentleman asks me, in reply to a series of detailed inquiries, to say how, when, why, and where each fiscal change is to be carried out? There is a question which has to be decided before we enter upon these details; that is whether you want fiscal reform or not. The right hon. Gentlemen wishes to know how exactly we propose to lower the tariffs, and how exactly we propose to prevent "dumping" at unfair prices. There have often been requests for information of that kind far in advance of any practical issue, but I venture to say that they have never been conceded, and that the person to resist the demand for information of this kind in regard to future legislation would have been Mr. Gladstone himself, who had not infrequent opportunity of showing how rigidly he was opposed to the declaration of detailed methods of carrying out a policy until the time came for the policy to be placed before the country. There is a question to be decided before that, and it is "Are you in favour of fiscal reform?" The right hon. Gentleman pretends to be less informed as to the fiscal question than I can give him credit for being, for he has been talking of fiscal reform at many meetings, yet he still pretends not to know what it is. I should have thought that it would have been well for him to have acquainted himself with it before he undertook to pledge himself and the country to objections at the threshold to any kind of reform whatever. The first question for the House and the country is whether they desire to reform the fiscal policy. Does the right hon. Gentleman wish to prevent "dumping?" I should be glad of an answer. [MINISTERIAL cheers and laughter]. But perhaps before he gives it he will consult the Member for West Monmouth, who, to this portion of fiscal reform at any rate, has promised his careful consideration.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I said I would consider any plan dealing with dumping which was proposed by His Majesty's Government.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I venture to think the right hon. Gentleman has not in his mind what he stated in South Wales. I think he said that it was a very serious question, particularly to his constituents.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I remember perfectly well what I said. I said I should be ready to consider any plan dealing with dumping which was proposed by His Majesty's Government, or by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: If that was exactly what the right hon. Gentleman said, then I am bound to take his account of it. But it must have been cold comfort for his constituents and for the representatives of certain South Wales industries who waited upon him on this subject when he assured them of his willingness to consider any plan dealing with dumping. In due course we are promised an opportunity of a wider discussion of this question, and I do not propose to go further with it now. I think we must wait until that opportunity offers. I altogether deny that there is any doubt about the attitude of the Government, or that there is any difficulty, for those who wish to ascertain, to make sure of what it is. As to the particular methods by which that policy is to be pursued, I think we are entitled to maintain our freedom. It is not wise in matters of negotiation to go into details too closely, and it has never been the practice of this House to bring forth detailed schemes in advance. What we ask the House to say is that our fiscal scheme stands in need of absolute reform and change; that it is a policy that has bound us hand and foot, and left us helpless in the face of these high foreign tariffs, and that it has failed to secure for us that open door which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose tells us is so vital to our existence; that our fiscal policy has failed to guard those great interests on which the prosperity of the Empire depends.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, East) rose at 7.28 to continue the debate, but, his utterances were lost in the noise made by Members leaving the House.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy*).

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

MR. BUCHANAN: When the House rose at half-past seven I wanted to lay before the consideration of the House, and press a little further than my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition, two subjects. They are geographically somewhat far apart, yet they are subjects of some considerable interest in view of the statement in the King's Speech. I wanted to say a few words, first about Thibet and then about the Transvaal finance. I am sorry at this moment the Secretary of State for India is not present, because, if he answered my preliminary question, I should say no more on the question of Thibet. He has promised us Papers —they were promised in the King's Speech—but no statement was made as to when they were to be produced. If the right hon. Gentleman said they were to be produced immediately I should say nothing more on this subject until a later stage of the debate, but as no time has been mentioned, we cannot expect them to be produced immediately. I would also have asked him whether he could give an assurance that after the Papers have been produced we should be given an opportunity to discuss this question, because otherwise what may and probably will happen, will be that after the debate on the King's Speech comes to an end there will be no opportunity for raising discussion on any Indian subject until the Indian budget comes on, which is in the last week of the session. Not only is that an unfavourable opportunity, but events will then have gone forward in such a way that all the discussion we shall be able to have will be on events that have taken place instead of being able to offer criticisms on a policy of which some of us may approve and some may disapprove. I do not think either the paragraph in the King's Speech or the statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer really advances us further on the subject than we were in August last when the House adjourned. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us there was friction on the frontier; there were difficulties connected with grazing and difficulties in connection with trade rights on the frontier. That is almost the exact statement which was made to us in August last by the noble Lord the then Secretary of State for India in reply to a Question put to him from this side of the House. The point of difference between then and now is this, that while the noble Lord then stated that in consequence of these differences an expedition had beed dispatched under Colonel Younghusbann with an escort of 200 to a place called the Chumbi Valley over the Jeylepla Pass the state of affairs now is very different. Now, instead of a peaceful escort of 200 men, Colonel Younghusband has something like 2,000 men with him, exclusive of camp followers. It seems to me to be an abuse of the King's Speech to describe this as a simple political mission. In the first place you are sending a mission over the border into a foreign country and you are accompanying it with a large military force. It cannot be described as a political mission. Colonel Younghusband is accompanied by a force too large for an escort and too small for an army, and the conditions are exactly similar to those which led to the Afghan war. Then we had imaginary Russian intrigues in Afghanistan; now we have imaginary Russian intrigues in Lhassa. I say the course of events bears an ominous and ill-omened resemblance to the course of events that led up to the Afghan war, and we ought to have from the Government some assurance on the subject beyond the vague promise of the production of Papers at some time or other. It is useless for us to be put off by fair words; public opinion is gravely alarmed at what has taken place. The Thibetans up to the present have been a peaceful people. On the south of the Sikkim frontier the land is grand and fruitful; on the northern side it is arid and barren, and no doubt they do prefer to pasture their flocks and herds on the southern side. Of that we are aware, but so far as official statements go there has been nothing to show there has been any serious increase in that grievance or that there has been any serious character in that grievance for months and years past, yet we have this expedition to within 100 miles of Lhassa. No wonder the Thibetan people should be seriously alarmed at what we may have in view, and that they should be, to say the least, doubtful as to what our intentions are.

When one wants to see what ideas are held, one only has to look at the Anglo-Indian newspapers to see that we desire by our expedition to enforce on the Lamas of Thibet a British Agent at Lhassa, which they are strongly opposed to. And it must be remembered that they are not only opposed to a British agent but they have never allowed a Russian or any foreign agent whatever in Lhassa. We want also to annex the Chumbi Valley, a splendid country, and it is currently believed in India, at all events, that we desire to enforce absolutely on Thibet Indian trade, if necessary by force of arms, not only through the Jeylepla Pass and the Chumbi Valley but in the other directions as well. These ideas may be all imaginary, and it only needs a word from the Government to prove them so, but we have had no explanation whatever either from the Indian or the Home Government of what our motives are and the purpose for which this expedition is sent over the border into a foreign country. I will not go further on this subject on the present occasion, but I do hope before the debate on the Address ends we shall get some further imformation from the Secretary of State for India or some other member of the Government. I should not wish to carry this matter to the length of bringing a Motion before the House, but I am afraid that what happened in 1878 will happen in this case. When Sir Neville Chamberlain was sent with 1,000 men over the Khyber Pass it is true no Motion such as I have referred to was put before the House. But what happened? Sir Neville Chamberlain had to go back and war ensued,. We have now sent Colonel Younghusband with 2,000 men over the Jeylepla Pass, and no doubt collisions will occur, and then the Government will have to bring a Motion before the House. I do not know whether the time is yet ripe for bringing forward such a Motion.

I now turn to the other subject on which I desire to say a few words, the subject of the Transvaal finance. It has been alluded to by my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition, and was partly alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his reply. My right hon. friend confessed that he was surprised, and I am as surprised as he, that there was no mention of the subject of South Africa in the King's Speech. Occasionally no news is good news, but on this occasion I am afraid no news is the reverse of good news, and I was somewhat surprised that in the remarks of the Chancellor of the Exchequer the right hon. Gentleman omitted entirely to deal with one side of the question, because it not only affects the finance and prosperity of the Transvaal, but it materially affects the finance of this country. It must be in the recollection of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and most Members of this House that on the debate on the Budget of last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of that time, was criticised and pressed as to the provision he had made for diminishing and paying off the National Debt, and as to the sufficiency of the provision made. His reply always was—

> "We have got £30,000,000 coming from the Transvaal, £10,000,000 in January, 1904, £10,000,000 in January, 1905, and £10,000,000 in January, 1906."

All that was to go in reduction of the National Debt as a payment from the Transvaal and Orange River Colony towards the expenses of the war. Not only did the then Chancellor of the Exchequer say that, but it was put into an Act of Parliament, because in sub-Section 2, Clause 2, of the South African War and Loan Act, 1903, it is specially provided that these repayments shall be devoted to that purpose. It was a binding agreement between the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the supreme authority of the finance of this country, and these colonies. We know now that the first instalment is not forthcoming, and what I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he were here, or any other member of the Ministry, is this: What steps has the Chancellor of the Exchequer taken, as the supreme authority of the finance of this country, or what steps does he propose to take, for the diminution and paying off of debt in the current year, in view of the fact that this £10,000,000 on which he relied is not forthcoming? As I have said, it was put into an Act of Parliament, and last session it was defended again and again, because, while the Finance Bill was going through the House, my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition drew attention to Clause 6; to the want of definite security for the advance of this £30,000,000, and he was supported in his criticisms by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol. The reply of the Chancellor of Exchequer was, so far as words go, as reassuring as could be, particularly with regard to the first £10,000,000.

> "Therefore," he said, "so far as the first £10,000,000 we are quite safe."

That was the assurance given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Committee stage of the Finance Bill on an Amendment moved by my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition on this specific point as late as the 22nd of June. Not only was that assurance given, but we had equally strong assurances given by other members of the Government of equal weight and authority with regard to this part of the business. What I want to press upon the House and the Colonial Secretary is this, that the issue of this loan of £30,000,000 to the Transvaal was part and parcel of the whole scheme of Transvaal finance. It was one part of the bargain by which this country was prepared to advance £30,000,000 to the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies. I do not wish to labour the subject, but I have here several statements by the late Colonial Secretary on the subject. They start with one at Johannesburg. In setting out the scheme he described it as the second part of the agreement that another loan of £30,000,000 should be called up in annual instalments of £10,000,000; but there was a much stronger statement than that made by the right hon. Gentleman after he came home on the 6th of May, in which he said—

> "The whole arrangement, that is the two loans, must be treated together, and I might almost say that the support of the Committee to the loan now under consideration is indeed conditional on the contribution of the £30,000,000 to which I have referred."

What could be stronger than that? But he goes on to say that in order that success might be assured, and to show their confidence in their country, the capitalists of the Transvaal agreed to underwrite the first £10,000,000 of the loan. On the 27th of July, on the Second Reading of the Bill, these are the words the right hon. Gentleman used—

> "I have no doubt that a satisfactory agreement will be made between us and the underwriters of the loan to make it absolutely certain as to the first instalment of the loan that will be placed upon the market,"

and we have a further statement made in the House on the same day by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the question raised by my right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouth on the same subject, when the right hon. Gentleman said a draft audit was being made and being sent out to South Africa, and that when it was settled it would be laid on the Table of the House. What we want to get from the Colonial Secretary now is some further information on the subject than has been vouchsafed. So far as details go, we know nothing of what has taken place since July last. I have been informed that a Motion was tabled in the Legislative Council of the Transvaal that this money should not be advanced. At any rate we are in possession of the fact that the loan has not been brought out, and that the first instalment has not been paid. We want further information. We want to know what was the close of these negotiations which were going on in July last. Can the right hon. Gentleman inform us, and can he table the correspondence of the same? Can he inform the House of the views of the Transvaal authorities on the subject? I gather from his nodding assent that he will be able to give us full information as to why, in respect of this guaranteed advance, they have now gone back from the guarantee they gave. It is a matter in which there ought to be further investigation and information from the Government, and when the Colonial Secretary gives this information we should also like to get from him information on the other points, as to which my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition asked, with regard to Transvaal finance. The statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer is rather disquieting, both as regards the £10,000,000 and the interest of the £30,000,000. I think we ought to get from the Colonial Secretary some particulars on this subject. The House is well aware that the security for the payment of the interest on the

£35,000,000 depends primarily on the railway revenue of the Transvaal, and, beyond that, on the general assets of the two colonies combined. In the middle of last summer Lord Milner had what seemed to some of us somewhat rosy anticipation as to the development of the revenue and the restriction of the expenditure of the Transvaal, and I hope we shall have from the Colonial Secretary a complete statement as to the railway revenue, and also the general revenue for the half-year ended December 31st last, and, further, as to the separate expenditure of the two colonies for that period, and the joint expenditure for the South African Constabulary. Such information would give us an idea as to how far the finances of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony have declined during the past half-year, and enable us to make some rational estimate of the probabilities of the future. It will be remembered that when the Bill was under discussion the £35,000,000 were devoted to a variety of objects, and the amounts to be paid for specific purposes were left somewhat vague and general. Will the right hon. Gentleman now tell us what has been paid for the purchase of railways, and state the correct estimate for the settlement of the claims between the military and colonial authorities with regard to the railways? By so doing he will strengthen our knowledge of the condition of affairs in South Africa, and reassure the rational fears which we feel as to the security for the loan of £35,000,000, and as to the possible future fulfilment of the pledges of the Transvaal and the guarantors with regard to the £30,000,000, and particularly the first instalment due in January of this year.

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I am sure that all Members of the House who took part in the recent visit to the French Deputies appreciate the mention in the King's Speech of the great courtesy and attention which they received. It is impossible to speak in too high terms of the hospitality and kindness with which we were received by the French Deputies, the French Government, the Mayors, the Presidents of the Chambers of Commerce, and the French people generally. The President of the French Republic, in receiving the Deputation, referred in these terms to the visit—

> "There is infinite cause to be glad for the movement which is going forward and now being carried on by the two great western nations. A new era of fraternity is opening before us which must never be permitted to close."

It would have been unworthy not to acknowledge the kindness with which we were received, and the pains taken in the matter by Baron D'Estournelles de Constant and the hon. Member for the Romford Division of Essex.

The mention in the Speech of the redemption of the promise made by the Prime Minister of New Zealand to inaugurate preferential trade between Great Britain and New Zealand will afford great satisfaction. The mover of the Address referred to the fact that five years ago Canada established this preferential treatment of British goods, and on the visit of the right hon. Gentleman for West Birmingham to South Africa the Customs Convention gave a preference of 25 per cent. to British goods entering the South African markets. The fact that this preference has been established in New Zealand and that the proposal has been so warmly taken up by the Legislature and the people of the colony, cannot be otherwise than a great relief to large numbers of people in this country who are suffering from the present depression of trade. The condition of affairs in many parts of the country is well illustrated by the *Labour Gazette* for the present month. In the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition there was much that was interesting and amusing, but it contained no proposal or suggestion tending to provide a remedy for the actual condition of things which exists. According to the *Labour Gazette*, 37,500 trades unionists were out of employment at the latter end of December. If that is the case with regard to skilled artisans, it is quite certain that the state of affairs with regard to unskilled labour is infinitely worse, though no definite returns are available. During the years 1901–2–3 3,000,000 workpeople sustained decrease in wages, while on a single day in December last 370,469 people in the

United Kingdom were dependent on poor law relief for their existence. Moreover, during the year 1903 261,363 persons emigrated from the United Kingdom, going for the most part to countries where their industry and labour would be protected, in despair of being able to obtain a livelihood in this country. We must express our gratitude that the first measure mentioned in the Speech is one to deal with the evil of alien immigration, to which for many years some of us have called attention. While over 260,000 people emigrated from the United Kingdom last year, their places were taken by no less than 82,000 of the scum of Eastern Europe. The Leader of the Opposition said that these people came from the most highly protected countries, thereby implying that they were dissatisfied with their condition in those countries; but what about the 260,000 who left the Free Trade market of this country to go to countries where their industry would be protected? I earnestly hope the Government will introduce the promised Bill at the earliest opportunity, and press it forward with the utmost speed. This is not the first time that such a Bill has been announced. A measure was promised in 1896, and in the subsequent session the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon stated that the Government had no intention of departing from the pledges they had given on the subject, but, with the exception of the appointment of a Royal Commission, nothing further has been heard of the matter until now.

There is only one other matter to which I desire to refer, and that is the general problem of the Army and War Office reform. The scheme which appeared in the papers yesterday has been well received generally. There is one matter of military administration which is very serious indeed, and presses for early consideration and amelioration —the condition of the Militia and Volunteer forces. Both of those branches of the auxiliary forces show a serious decline. It is harder than ever to get officers for the Volunteers; the force is under-officered to the extent of between 2,000 and 3,000; recruits are coming in very slowly indeed, and the resignations are very numerous. I am aware that a Commission is at present inquiring into these matters, and it will be difficult for the Secretary of State to bring forward any scheme until that Commission has reported. The matter, however, is an extremely urgent one, and the recent speech of the Secretary of State for War gives us great hope that in his hands the Volunteer force will receive fairer treatment and better consideration than it has recently experienced at the hands of the military authorities.

MR. PAULTON (Durham, Bishop Auckland): Perhaps I ought to apologise for intervening in the debate, but I do so for the purpose of asking a definite Question on a matter of considerable public importance. In the debate on the Amendment moved to the Address last year, calling attention to the case of the London and Globe Finance Corporation, the view was taken by the Government that the present state of the law did not enable them to advise a prosecution in the case as matters then stood, but the Prime Minister gave a definite pledge that legislation should be introduced to amend the law in the respects in which it was held to be defective. The words of the Prime Minister were—

> "I ask the House to be content with the pledge that I have given, that we should endeavour to amend the law in accordance with that broad view of commercial morality so ably defended by my hon. friend."

No reference whatever is made in the King's Speech to that pledge or to the subject on which it was given. As the Attorney-General is in his place, and in view of a debate which I understand is to be raised on an Amendment referring to the matter, I trust the hon. and learned Member may be able to explain to the House why no reference has been made to the matter.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): I feel that the Question of the hon. Member is a perfectly reasonable one. As regards the inquiry with which he concluded I would remind the House that it is not necessary to include in the King's Speech every matter with regard to what it may be the intention of the Government to introduce legislation, but I shall certainly endeavour to answer fully and frankly the substance of the Question which the hon. Gentleman has put to me, and for that purpose I think the House will agree that it is probably desirable that I should enter into matters on which my mouth was closed while the case out of which this Question arises was still pending. When this matter was under discussion a year ago I told the House that nothing would induce me to say a word which would prejudice either the prosecution or the defence, and to that resolution I adhered. Now, of course, no such considerations are applicable, and I am at liberty fully to answer the Question asked by the hon. Gentleman. I desire to say, before I enter into the matter, that I hope that the fact that this Question has been raised at this stage and that I now make a statement upon it, will not in any way interfere hereafter with the fullest possible discussion of the Question which the House may desire. Opportunities may arise hereafter, and it certainly would be my desire, and I am perfectly certain that it would be the desire of the Government, that the fullest possible discussion which the House might think requisite, should take place upon this subject. In the first place, I wish to make clear one matter on which I think there is a good deal of misconception. It seems to have been supposed that the decision as to not putting the Director of Public Prosecutions in motion in the case of Whitaker Wright was the decision of the Government. It was nothing of the kind. The sole responsibility for that decision rests upon myself as Attorney-General. It is not a case in which the Government decide. It is not a case in which the Government are advised by the Law Officers. The law casts upon the Attorney-General the duty of deciding upon such a question in what I may call almost a judicial capacity. In the discharge of the duties which the law devolves upon him no other member of the Government either can or would dream of endeavouring to interfere with his discretion.

A NATIONALIST MEMBER: On what principle do you send people to gaol?

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: One other observation I desire to make is that

the responsibility of the Attorney-General in this matter is not one which is to be shared with any of his colleagues. I am the first to acknowledge the invaluable assistance which I have derived in this and in all other cases from the gentlemen who have co-operated with me, but the decision rests with the Attorney-General, and for that decision those who have assisted him in the matter are in no sense responsible. The sole responsibility rests upon him alone, and it is the Attorney-General alone who is answerable to the House and the country for the manner in which he exercises his responsibility. In dealing with the question as to putting the Director of Public Prosecutions in motion the Attorney-General, as I have said, must decide almost as if he were a judge. It is for me to decide in a *quasi* judicial capacity. I have referred to the fact that last year I said that on the subject of the grounds of my decision my mouth was closed, because a summons was then pending before a judge for leave to prosecute, and I felt that anything I attempted to say in justification of myself might have operated either to help the prosecution or the defence, and no consideration relating to myself would induce me to utter one syllable which would interfere with a fair and unprejudiced trial of any case which was pending. Now I am at liberty, after what has taken place, to state what my grounds were; and I think that, in answering the Question put by the hon. Gentleman, the House is entitled to expect from me not only a categorical answer to the Question, but also an explicit statement of the grounds upon which I took the action I did in the case of Whitaker Wright, and of the grounds upon which I thought, as I still think, that an amendment of the law is urgently required. What I have to say, of course, as to the grounds on which I acted relates solely to the case as it appeared on the materials then before me in 1902, when I had to decide upon it. I am about to deal with the case as it was then presented to me. With regard to the subsequent prosecution and the result of these proceedings, I have one thing to say to the House, and one only, and that is that since the case has been terminated the

Treasury have, with my full concurrence, determined that they ought to bear the cost of the prosecution. I now proceed to state what were the grounds that actuated me in the course which I took.

Whitaker Wright was, as is well-known to the House, the managing director of the Globe Company. The Globe Company was a company which carried on a highly speculative business. In the year 1900 it had got into very great difficulties, and Whitaker Wright, on behalf of the company, engaged in an enterprise which was intended to restore its fortunes. That enterprise was this—he endeavoured to establish what is called a corner, on a very large scale, in the shares of a company called the Lake View, a corner in Lake View Consols; and the particular operation that he was engaged upon was this—he entered into contracts for the purchase of Lake View Consols on a very large scale, and at the same time he was taking measures to secure that the very shares which he was buying should be under his control, so that many of the sellers to him would have to go to him when the day for delivery came and give him any terms he chose to ask for in order that they might be in a position to fulfil the purchase. That was the operation. If that operation had succeeded, as it very nearly did succeed, the fortunes of the Globe Company would have been to a very great extent retrieved. It failed. The enterprise in itself was, in my view, contrary to every sound code of commercial morality. I believe that it is an absolutely immoral thing for a man to enter into a transaction of that kind when he is buying and at the same time is taking steps to prevent those from whom he is buying from being able to fulfil their contracts, except by submitting to any terms he may choose to dictate. Further than that, I have no doubt whatever that such an enterprise falls within the range of the criminal law if it is carried out by several persons in combination, at least if any circumstances of misrepresentation attend it. I most carefully considered this question in the summer of 1902, and I most certainly should have directed a prosecution of Whitaker Wright for a conspiracy of this kind if it had been possible to obtain any evidence that others acted in conspiracy with him in the matter. I was informed that no evidence of that kind was obtainable. So strongly did I feel upon this point that I adjourned the consultation in order that inquiries might be made as to whether any such evidence could be obtained. I was informed that no such evidence was obtainable, that Whitaker Wright had operated in substance alone. I do not think that the criminal law can reach an enterprise of this kind carried out by one person by himself and not in combination with others. The law of conspiracy would not apply. The question, therefore, was reduced to this, whether I could properly direct a Treasury prosecution of Whitaker Wright for issuing a fraudulent balance sheet.

The balance sheet of 1900, in my opinion — and I of course speak only of the case upon the evidence as it was submitted to me in the summer of 1902—contained statements which were grossly untrue. That was the impression I formed upon the evidence before me, and I do not pretend to speak as to anything else. But then a further question arose before a prosecution could be properly directed, and that was the question as to the intent with which these misrepresentations had been made. Now I feel very strongly that the law ought to be that any wilful misrepresentation in any document issued by officials of a company ought to be punishable. The shareholders and the creditors of the company are entitled to know the truth; and whatever the intent with which a misleading statement is put forth, if that misleading and untrue statement is wilfully made, I think the officials of the company who make that statement ought to be punishable. But beyond all controversy that was not the law up to the end of December, 1900. It was necessary, further, that the misrepresentation should have been made with intent to defraud certain classes of persons. The question depended upon Section 84 of the Larceny Act of 1861. According to the provisions of that section there must not only have been misrepresentation in a document issued by the officials, but that misrepresentation must have been with the intent to deceive or defraud shareholders or creditors, or to induce persons to become shareholders in the company, or to induce persons to entrust or advance property to the company, or to become security for the company. The section does not provide at all for the case of misrepresentations made with the general intent to defraud the public, unless it happen to fall within the particular classes to which I have referred as enumerated in the section. The most material intent for this purpose was the intent to deceive or defraud shareholders or creditors. The word deceive in that collocation, in my mind, means, substantially, the same thing as defraud—that is, to mislead persons on questions of fact with a view to prejudicing them pecuniarily. I cannot better illustrate my meaning than by quoting to the House the language in which Chief Justice Cockburn charged the jury in a case under this section in the year 1880. The case was one of great magnitude, the trial of which extended over many days. It was a prosecution under this same Section 84 of the Larceny Act of 1861. It was a case in which the assets of the company had been dissipated in rash speculation, and after that had taken place the directors issued a balance sheet in which certain of the assets of the company were most grossly overvalued. The summing up of Chief Justice Cockburn appeared in *The Times* of May 6th, 1880. In the course of that summing up he dealt with the question of the intentional misrepresentation of the facts in stating that assets that were said to be worthless were of the value of between one and two millions. Then he came to the question of intent, and he said, addressing the jury—

> "But even if you should be of opinion that the accounts were intentionally falsified, that alone would not be sufficient to determine this question, because, even if you are of opinion that the defendants acted contrary to their duty in treating this property as a real and substantial asset of the company, you will have to say whether you are satisfied that they did so with the fraudulent purpose of defrauding the shareholders and the creditors of the company or to induce persons to become shareholders in order to defraud them also. There would scarcely have been any intention on their part to defraud the shareholders and the creditors, because it is plain that the very best thing that could be done under the circumstances in the interests of the shareholders and of the creditors was to keep the bank going."

Sir John Holker, I should observe, was then Attorney-General, and this was a Treasury prosecution. The Chief Justice continues—

> "Sir John Holker suggested that that was the very motive of the fraud he imputes to the defendants. But how could keeping the bank going defraud the shareholders or the creditors? No doubt to have made the real state of things known would have been to have produced an immediate depreciation of the property of the shareholders, and it was in the interest of the shareholders that the facts should be kept, as it were, in abeyance, and not at once disclosed so as to alarm the public."

I do not think that ought to be the law. I think that if an untrue statement is made by officials of a company in the balance sheet they ought to be amenable to the criminal law. But in deciding this matter one could only deal with the criminal law as it stood at the time when the transactions took place. I therefore had to inquire before I set the Public Prosecutor in motion whether, on the facts before me, the intention of Whitaker Wright in making these misstatements in the balance-sheet was to defraud any class of persons mentioned in the section. After most carefully considering the matter on all the materials that were at my disposal in 1902, when I determined this point, it seemed to me that the purpose of these mis-statements was really to support a corner which, if successful, would have re-established the fortunes of the company, to keep the company going till it succeeded; and, however reprehensible the whole enterprise in its very nature was, however reprehensible these misrepresentations which were intended to assist it were, that it was done, not with intent to injure, but with a desire to benefit, the shareholders and the creditors of the Globe Company. That was the real substance of the matter with regard to this transaction in the year 1900. As regards the balance sheet of 1899, there is one further observation which I should make. The Official Receiver did not bring the balance sheet of 1899 before me at all as a possible subject of prosecution. It was brought before me subsequently in the month of December, 1902, by Mr. Flower.

I, with my colleagues, had a long consultation upon this point. The Official Receiver reported to me that, in his opinion, the case upon this balance-sheet of 1899 was a very weak one upon the fact of misrepresentation. Upon these materials I came to the conclusion that I ought not to direct that the Public Prosecutor should institute a Treasury prosecution in this case.

I need hardly say that the fact that the case is not taken up by the Public Prosecutor sets no bar whatever against a prosecution by anyone else. Anyone may issue a prosecution, and anyone, where a company is in liquidation, may apply to the judge for a direction that, at the expense of the estate, a prosecution be instituted. My decision was given and announced in this House in the summer of 1902. It was open to those who desired a prosecution either to prosecute themselves or to apply at once to the judge in whose court the winding-up of the company was proceeding. Nothing of that kind was done until the month of January, 1903. During the six months that elapsed before that application was made, attempts were made in various ways to induce me to give the weight of the name of the Director of Public Prosecutions to the proposed proceedings. I think the House will agree that it is absolutely unnecessary for me to notice any suggestions that were made, that my action in this case was due to any unworthy motive; and I think the House will further agree with me that it is important, and, indeed essential, that those with whom the responsibility of administering the criminal law rests should not allow themselves to be urged into action either by pressure or by dread of misrepresentation of their motives.

There is another consideration which had weight with me in determining whether this was a case in which the Director of Public Prosecutions should lend all the weight of his name and authority to the proceedings that were desired. Many Members of the House will be aware that in the year 1902 an action was pending by the Globe Company against certain brokers for selling shares in the Lake View Company, in breach, it was said, of agreement not to sell under a certain price, and by that sale under the agreed price causing the collapse of the whole scheme on which Whitaker Wright had relied for the restoration of the fortunes of the Globe Company. If that action had succeeded large damages would have been recovered for the shareholders and creditors of the Globe Company. That action was continued by the Official Receiver; it had been commenced by the company before the company went into liquidation. The question of directing a prosecution was never brought before me until after that action had failed, as it failed in the summer of 1902. In that action Whitaker Wright had been the principal witness —in fact, the material witness who was put forward on behalf of the company. All the matters which were relied upon in respect of the application for a prosecution had been known for a long time and were known while that action was pending. The question I had to consider was whether the Public Prosecutor should, at the instance of the Official Receiver, when the action failed, lend the weight of his name to a prosecution in respect of these very matters which had been known at the time when Whitaker Wright was put forward as a witness in support of that action. It seemed to me that such a course would have been open to very strong and just observation.

As regards the alteration of the law in the future, I have two things to say. The first is this—I am not prepared to recommend to the House to proceed to deal with the law affecting what are called corners, or the analogous subject of rigging the market. The question is one of very great intricacy, and legislation upon it, however desirable in the interests of commercial morality, would be attended with very great difficulties. I should like that something should be done in this matter, but it cannot be done until after very full and complete inquiry into the whole subject, and the views are ascertained, not only of lawyers, but of business men, with regard to it. With reference to the question of making punishable the issue of statements by officials of public companies which they know to be untrue, I have a very strong and definite opinion that legislation ought to proceed on the lines adopted in the 28th Section of the Companies Act of 1900. By that section, which relates only to documents required by, or for the purposes of the Act of 1900, any wilfully false statement in such a document is a misdemeanour. The provision is not encumbered with the necessity of proving intent to defraud any classes of persons such as contained in the 84th Section of the Larceny Act of 1861. Now, surely this is right. Shareholders and creditors, in regard to statements promulgated by the officials of companies, are entitled to have the truth, and any wilful mis-statement by officials of companies in such documents should be an offence. If there is no intent to defraud, that ought to go and would go in mitigation of punishment, but if a mis-statement is wilfully made, in my judgment in every case, it ought to be amenable to the criminal law. If such a change were made it would relieve all those who have to deal in subsequent cases with such problems as came before me in 1902, from the difficulty which attended the proposal that I should direct the Public Prosecutor to institute a Treasury prosecution in this particular case. I think I have answered the Question which was put by the hon. Gentleman opposite, and in conclusion, I have only to say this: any Attorney-General would be unfit for his position, who from any by-motive failed to prosecute in a proper case, and more than that, and on the other hand, any Attorney-General would be unfit for his position, who, because a particular prosecution would be a popular thing to do, sets the Public Prosecutor in motion without being satisfied that it is a proper case for that intervention. Indeed where a case has in it materials which are likely to inflame public feeling, I think it is the duty of the Attorney-General, under whose orders the Public Prosecutor has to act, to be very cautious as to what his action is. Whatever view may be taken of the conclusion at which I arrived on the materials which were before me in 1902, I feel perfectly certain that the House—and I hope I may say that every hon. Member, in whatever part of the House he may sit —will have no doubt that in this case I acted to the best of my ability, and with a single eye to the discharge of those delicate and responsible duties which the law casts upon the Attorney-General.

Sir Robert Finlay.

*Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): The hon. and learned Gentleman has, with that lucidity which we all admire, dealt with this case as it concerns himself personally. I do not rise to offer any observations on his remarks further than to say that I am sure I for one willingly concur in the sentence with which he concluded his speech. I rise rather to make some remarks in continuation of those which fell from the hon. Member for East Perthshire earlier in the evening, and which I wish had been listened to by a more crowded House than that which the hon. Member addressed. He put some very searching questions to the hon. Gentlemen who is now in the position of Colonial Secretary, and I am about to follow up those questions by some others. In the excellent speech to which we listened from the Leader of the Opposition, it was remarked that this was the first time for long —ten or twelve years, I think I might say —that we have had no mention in the Speech from the Throne of South Africa. I venture to say that the right hon. Gentleman who holds the seals of that office has found and will find that South Africa bulks very largely in the labours he has to undergo, and will do for many a day. We are all familiar with the rosy pictures drawn from the Benches opposite, and notably by the late Secretary of State for the Colonies, with regard to the state of that country—how we were to get repayment of the money advanced, how the country was to be a field for emigration of white labour and so forth. The right hon. Gentleman made a most remarkable speech on 6th May last, beside which the speech of any company promoter perfectly pales. In that speech, which occupies nearly thirty columns of "*Hansard*," the right hon Gentleman came under some very serious obligations. I hope in this connection we shall have from the Colonial Secretary very explicit assurances on the head of finance. With respect to the £30,000,000, the late Colonial Secretary used rather significant language on the 6th May, 1903. He then said—

> "It is true we are not dealing to-day with the raising of the £30,000,000 which will be required in order to pay the British Exchequer the contribution the colonies are willing to

make; but the whole arrangement must be treated together; and I might almost say that the support of the Committee to the loan which is now under consideration is under condition not upon the contribution of £30,000,000 to which I have referred."

My hon. friend dealt so fully with the details of the finance that I shall not say a word more on that subject.

I turn to what the Leader of the Opposition said as to the importation of Chinese labour into the Transvaal. We want a great deal more information on that subject. It is quite true that the right hon. Gentleman has given us to-day two Reports of the Labour Commission, but these Reports are unaccompanied by the evidence. The right hon. Gentleman knows very well that the essence of the case often lies in the evidence. I notice in running through the Reports that they refer to the evidence, and, therefore, I venture to say that the Reports are very imperfect, and of very little use indeed, until you can refer to the evidence. I hope when the right hon. Gentleman speaks he will tell us when we may expect the evidence that was placed before the Labour Commission. This subject cannot be over-estimated in importance. It is many years now since the action of George III. and his Ministers in refusing to allow the American Colonies to put an end to the slave trade of that day. The whole difficulty in the United States came from the action of the English Ministers with respect to the intrusion of black labour in that country. I do not know that the right hon. Gentleman remembers the debates on the question of Kanaka labour in Queensland, but if he looks into "*Hansard*," he will see the part that many of us took in regard to that question. It is remarkable that one of the first acts of the Australian Commonwealth Parliament was to put an end to the Kanaka difficulty. From the 31st of March this year, no Kanaka can be imported into Australian territory. Anyone who looks into the question of Chinese labour must see that it has in it the seeds of a problem of the most serious consequence to South Africa. Anybody who lives in San Francisco will tell you that you must be mad to allow it. Not only have we not got the evidence with the Reports, but we have not received the correspondence that passed between Lord Milner and the late Colonial Secretary on the subject. We want information brought to date by the official dispatches on the matter. We want an opportunity, free from the trammels of the debate on the Address, of discussing this question in all its relations. I wish to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to a promise which he gave. It was rather a remarkable promise for a Secretary of State to give. He said on 25th January, through his private secretary—

"Mr. Lyttelton desires me to say in reply to your letter of the 22nd inst., that it is intended to give an opportunity for a full discussion in Parliament of the question of the importation of labour."

I claim the fulfilment of that promise. To "give" an opportunity implies much more than that the Opposition shall "take" one.

It is the one vital matter before the people of Cape Colony. The right hon. Gentleman talks of treating the new territories in these matters as self-governing colonies. I venture to say that the first thing to do is to give them the institutions and rights of self-governing colonies. The opinion of the Legislative Council is hardly worth the paper it is written on so far as it conveys the opinions of the inhabitants of the Transvaal. I hope we may look forward to getting from the new Secretary of State more information of a detailed and official character as to what is going on in these new territories than we have received in the past. I must say in sitting down that we meet here under rather unfavourable circumstances owing to the most regrettable absence of the Prime Minister. I do earnestly hope that he will soon be restored to health, for we have at present a headless Government. No one could have listened to the Chancellor of the Exchequer—and I say this without any disrespect to the right hon. Gentleman—without feeling that the House was being left rudderless, because the pointed and authoritative inquiries of the Leader of the Opposition had been left unanswered. I hope that will be remedied in a few days, and that we shall have some one here to speak with the voice of authority on all the vital matters which must come before us.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition has made an attack of considerable force—I might almost say ferocity—on His Majesty's Ministers on the occasion of the Address. I think he has shown a want of consideration for the position of His Majesty's Government. They have lost some of their greatest figures. In Lord Salisbury they have lost a great statesman, who has left his impress on the politics of Europe; they have lost the late Secretary for India, and three Chancellors of the Exchequer; they have lost that eminent statesman whom the Prime Minister writes to as "Dear Duke," but whom the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, with greater familiarity or affection, addresses as "My dear Devonshire." The forlorn remnant who now sit a little band of heroes on that Bench must feel what their position is. They know that, though like the lords of the Philistines they sit on the roof making sport, there is beneath them a blind Samson bowing himself between the pillars to bring down the whole structure upon their heads. I think, therefore, that more consideration should have been shown than the speech of the right hon. Gentleman displayed. I will not detain the House at this late hour on that, but will come to the points referred to in the King's Speech. One has already been touched upon, but if the hon. Gentleman who drew attention to it will permit me to say so, I think he missed the point of the case. An expedition has been sent into Thibet. The Gracious Speech tells us that it is sent with the concurrence of the Chinese Government, but not a word is said as to whether we have the concurrence of Thibet. That is the most important point of all. If there is concurrence of Thibet, then this is a mission; if not it is an invasion. I put the specific Question whether this is a mission or a military operation of invasion to any Gentleman on the Front Bench who feels competent to answer it, and I take the Attorney-General for choice. It is really an extremely important Question, because if this is a military operation—and in my belief it is—the clause in the 1858 Act for the government of India, forbidding any application of the Revenues of India for military operations beyond the Indian frontier without consent of both Houses of Parliament, has been disobeyed and the law broken. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham is not here, but I may remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer that in 1878 this very question was raised by the right hon. Gentleman, who gave notice of a Motion in these words—

> "That this House regrets that in the present instance the consent of the nation, through its representatives, was not obtained before war was declared, and that the Government withheld from publication the Papers."

That was the exactly similar case of the war in Afghanistan and I may remind the House that the Member for West Birmingham, Lord Hartington, and Lord James of Hereford all voted against the Government of the day on this very ground. We are therefore entitled to most specific information, firstly, as to the reasons for the mission or military operation, secondly, as to its quality, and thirdly, as to whether in addition to the assent of China the assent of Thibet has been obtained to this missionary or invading operation.

With regard to China and Japan I hope no Member of this House will say more than the very least he can on the subject. I shall say very little, but this I must say. We have had for centuries but one ally in the world—Portugal. We have now taken another in Japan. Japan is the second country in the world which in a treaty we call an ally. Let the House and His Majesty's Government remember that when you have given that name by treaty to a State, and if that State should come to extremity, it is impossible to abandon them. I shall say no more on that subject except that up to this moment, and at this moment, it is this country that holds the balance. In any naval war coal is the determining factor, and we hold the coal. My hope and trust, and I would add my belief, is that His Majesty's Government have made their position and intentions clear in this matter to those who are concerned—absolutely clear, though in terms no doubt of the utmost courtesy. I do not believe they have failed to do so. If they have their responsibility would be great indeed. Let me remind the House what happened after the Russo-Turkish War of 1878, which bears in a most important degree on the situation at this moment. Lord Beaconsfield, speaking in July, 1878, after he had returned from the Congress at Berlin, used these words—

> "One of the results of my attending the Congress at Berlin has been to prove, what I have always suspected to be the absolute fact, that neither the Crimean War, nor this horrible devastating war which has just terminated, would have taken place if England had spoken with the necessary firmness."

The Question I put to myself and to Ministers is: "Has England spoken with the necessary firmness in this case, and is she now speaking with the necessary firmness?" If not the most serious consequences may ensue. I pass now to the most important Report on the proposed new supplementary body to the Defence Committee. It is dated 11th January but it is not yet in our hands, and I must say I feel some surprise to find no mention of it in the Gracious Speech from the Throne, except a casual and incidental reference to it, as if it had something to do with the question of economy. This most important subject lies at the root of the whole thing, at the root of our conduct in regard to this very Russo-Japanese War, at the root of our conduct in Thibet, for the Defence Committee is the very body to which we must look for guidance and we should take the advice of such a body before embarking on the very first steps in these matters. The subject is so extremely important that I do trust the greatest attention will be given to it by the Government. It is my belief that the new body, which, as I have said, is intended to be a supplementary body to the Committee of Defence, is entirely mis-conceived; that its constitution is wholly wrong, and that it will occupy a position which will render it nothing but a fifth wheel in the coach. It is proposed to make a new department, but the gentlemen who recommend it seem never to have had before their minds the official heirarchy or the necessity of finding a place in that hierarchy for the suggested new department. Who is to be at the head of it? The suggestion is that the head of it should be the Prime Minister, an official unknown to the English law but who usually is, and always ought to be, First Lord of the Treasury. When that is so is this new department to be under the Treasury; when it is not so, when, as recently, the Prime Minister is Lord Privy Seal, then under whom is the department, as a department, to be? To this some answer is required. The constitution of the proposed nucleus of a department is also to my mind fatally defective. The object is that it is to be permanent, but this body has no permanency about it. The secretary is to be appointed for five years, and the nucleus is to be composed of six or seven gentlemen of inferior rank, naval and military, to be appointed for only two years. Therefore, I do seriously say to the Government that there is a necessity for the reconsideration of the constitution of this body. I lay before the Government two points. First of all, you should have on such a body as this an archivist, someone corresponding to the Clerk of the Privy Council who keeps the book of the Council; and secondly, it is absolutely essential that you should have as a member of this body a man cognisant with international law, especially in sea matters. My suggestion has been that the archivist, clerk of council, or chancellor should be an international lawyer. My own belief is that no body to consider and co-ordinate our strategic and political problems can be satisfactory unless it be in the nature of a permanent Royal Commission, with a permanent clerk or archivist whose salaries should be charged on the Consolidated Fund in order to prevent their acts being discussed in this House, for that I would prevent.

The references to finance in the King's Speech are certainly not encouraging; to many they will be discouraging. The House will remember that when the late Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced his Budget last year I most earnestly warned him that his estimates were exaggerated, and I affirmed to him more than once my confidence that his estimates of revenue would not be reached. As we now know, they will not be reached. It seems to me quite certain, however, that the Government were under the belief that these estimates would not only be reached, but would be surpassed, for it is on that theory alone that I can understand their buying the two Chilian warships for £1,800,000. The House will recollect that I suggested in March last to the Government to buy these warships, but the First Lord of the Treasury then said that they would not buy them because the vessels were not suited to our requirements. I cannot reconcile their former statement and their present purchase. My own belief is that they are and were always better ships than we had ourselves, and that it was a very good step on the part of the Government to make the purchase. But they could not have done so unless they believed that they were going to have a surplus to enable them to accomplish it. The Government could not treat these £1,800,000 as a portion of the sum to be spent on their naval programme and spread over several years; the money being actually expended must, I conceive, be treated as a portion of the expenditure of the year. If that be so, and if my rough estimates of the probable financial results of the year ending 31st March next, are at all near the truth, I can only foresee a deficit of £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 which is rather an alarming outlook.

Then as to the £10,000,000 of the Transvaal loan guaranteed by the great mineowners, we are now told that this is not an opportune time to issue the loan. But the loan is guaranteed; and it is the guarantors who have to see how and in what manner they will provide this money. They have guaranteed it to us, and we have a right to call upon them to fulfil their guarantee. I am the first to admit that the moment is not favourable for the issue of any loan—neither this loan, nor the Irish loan, nor anything else. Nobody who studies the finances of the country can be without great apprehension for the future, were it only for the fact that Consols during the reign of this Government have fallen 27 per cent. Our finances are in a very uncertain, dangerous, and unstable condition, and it is very uncertain to look forward to a time which will be opportune for the issue of this £10,000,000 loan, or any loan at all. I see no such opportune moment in any prospect of the near future.

I wish to address a few remarks to the so-called fiscal question, which in reality is not a fiscal question at all, but a tariff question. Now I speak for nobody but myself, but I will say, and I think there are some who will agree with me, that if the road of taxing food is to be entered upon, I will not follow in that road whoever may lead. That however is not the road the Government are taking; that is not the policy of the Government as explained by the only man competent to explain it, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer has too modestly said. As to retaliation, I think that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was a little unfair in his description of the retaliation policy of the First Lord of the Treasury, whose absence I deeply deplore, and the cause of it. The policy of the Government, and of the First Lord of the Treasury, as regards retaliation is the most strictly limited policy ever presented to the world as a policy. Its central point is the exclusion of the taxation of food or raw material. It excludes also the creation of a high and a low tariff, although that is the only means I can see by which tariff retaliation can be effectually carried out. It is, furthermore, not to include a general tariff war, nor is any retaliation to be carried out without the assent of Parliament. I had the honour of elucidating this point by a letter to the Prime Minister who said he did not contemplate any change in the law, which implies that no new tax would be imposed without Parliamentary consent. Retaliation is therefore limited in an extraordinary, and to me in a most satisfactory degree, and I, for my part, am prepared to give the fullest and most favourable consideration to any proposal of retaliation limited in that manner. But it is impossible to forget that since the declaration of the Prime Minister at Sheffield, which I, for one, fully and completely accept, there have been other voices besides his. The Lord Privy Seal, the Postmaster General, and the President of the Council are convinced Free Traders; they are more than free fooders, they are Free Traders; but the Minister for Agriculture, the President of the Local Government Board, and what is more, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, are very different and have openly avowed their full sympathy with the food taxers. In fact the Government has been speaking with two voices—some members of it with one, some with another—and the Prime Minister occasionally with both. Therefore it is absolutely necessary, for those who, like myself, are convinced that it would be ruinous for this country to tax food, to have some clear and unambiguous enunciation of the policy of the Government. When we have the great advantage of the presence here of the First Lord of the Treasury, I trust that he will give us complete satisfaction on this point. We intend to support the Prime Minister as against the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, and we feel confident that he will stick to the guns that he trained upon the enemy in his great speech at Sheffield.

Now I have alluded to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I feel great interest in the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I congratulate him on attaining so great a position as he now enjoys. The Chancellor of the Exchequer also feels a great interest in me. He has most kindly and thoughtfully written a letter to one of my constituents in which he stated that nobody who knew me would attach the slightest importance to anything I said. While the Chancellor of the Exchequer was making that magnificent oration which so stirred the House to-night, I wished and longed that I could have the same feeling towards him that he has towards me, and that I need not pay any attention to him. But that is impossible. For, after all, he is Chancellor of the Exchequer. There is no doubt about that; hard as it may be to believe, it is the fact, and doubtless, among all the young Catos that have ever sat on that Bench and risen to speak, he gives a greater promise of developing in later days the effect produced by his right hon. friend, or relative, in his unparalleled efforts and stupendous successes at Newcastle, at Leeds, at Cardiff, and greatest of all in the Guildhall of London. There is, however, even in him, a certain want of definiteness as to the view of the Government on this question, and I may observe here that the First Lord of the Treasury has very largely added to the doubts some of us feel as to the attitude of the Government by what he said at Bristol so late as 14th November. He said there—

> "A new charge is now brought against us, namely, that the members of the Government, who are agreed on the immediate practical issue, are not agreed as to the desirability or practicability of further developments. This is no doubt a fact."

Thus there are not only two voices, there is admitted undoubted disagreement in the Government itself; wherefore it is most desirable, and indeed absolutely necessary, that some plain, definite, unambiguous statement of the policy of the Government should be made. Having that in view, it is in my opinion scarcely decent to initiate a debate in the most regrettable absence of the First Lord of the Treasury, who, it is true, is the only man competent to give us authoritatively the last declaration of the policy of the Government. It seems to me that it is impossible that the debate could be conducted adequately in his absence; I go farther, I consider it is absolutely improper that an Amendment to the Address should be moved from the Front Opposition Bench during his absence. Therefore I would appeal to right hon. Gentlemen opposite to curb their impatience, and to appeal to the Government to grant what I feel sure the Government would accord, a special day for the discussion of a special Resolution raising the whole tariff question. In my opinion, that is the proper course to be taken, and it would be calculated to draw forth from the Government the declaration which we all desire. That some such declaration is necessary I think must be apparent to the House and the whole country. I myself follow and adhere to the declaration which the Prime Minister made at Sheffield, but we who have been somewhat disturbed by the various utterances that have since been made, including his own, feel that some further declaration is now necessary, and we hope and believe that, as at Sheffield so now, the Prime Minister will declare himself in accord with those of us who are determined to oppose to the last and to the very utmost any attempt to tax the food of the people.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): I wish to intervene for a very few minutes in the debate. I do not desire to talk lightly on what may be a very serious matter to a great many people inside and outside the House. I concur with my hon. friend in thinking that this matter would have been raised more conveniently by a special Resolution; but when the debate does come on I think the House is entitled, and especially the Members of the Ministerial Party, to have a declaration from the Government on their fiscal policy more definite than anything which has yet been given. It is no mere academic question, and should not be treated as such, either in this House or in the country. It is in fact being made, whether with the approval of the Prime Minister or not I do not know, a test of Party loyalty and membership of the Party. Months ago I was told, long before the Duke of Devonshire's letter in connection with the Lewisham election, that a tariff reform candidate would be run against me at Greenwich. Many other Members had a similar experience. A more striking, a more surprising, a more scandalous thing has recently taken place, a member of the Government, the President of the Local Government Board, who sits on the Government Front Bench in virtue of Free Trade votes, using, or, as I should say, abusing his position, went down and supported the candidature of a gentleman who was standing in opposition to a Conservative Member of the House. The justification alleged for this is that there is a policy before the country which every loyal Conservative is bound to accept. Then we ought to know with the utmost precision what that policy is. There is a story of a 17th century persecution which is familiar to many Members, according to which King Charles I. propounded a certain oath requiring people to accept the government of the Church of England as laid down by Archbishops, Bishops, Archdeacons, *et cetera*, and those subjected to this oath very reasonably complained that they did not know what the phrase *et cetera* covered. But the lot of people in those days was easy compared with that of members of the Conservative Party now, because they had a great number of details of the ecclesiastical establishment, whereas we have almost nothing except the *et cetera*. We are being told in great urgency that the policy of the Government is a policy of fiscal-reform. What does "fiscal reform" cover? The Prime Minister directed us to ask ourselves whether we were in favour of fiscal reform. He might as well ask whether one is in favour of taking medicine. So much depends on what the medicine is. The Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to indicate that all that was meant was an admission that the commercial and industrial position of this country was not in its essence unreformable. Of course anyone can point out defects. I admit to the full that high foreign tariffs are a great evil; but in admitting that one does not necessarily admit that anything which calls itself a remedy is to be adopted. It is not wicked to be a protectionist and not wicked to be a free-trader, but it seems to be wicked, because it is exceedingly cruel, to propound to the country and the members of a Party a policy the limits of which no one knows. If we are to have a standard of orthodoxy in the Conservative and Unionist Party, and if Members are to be driven out who cannot accept that standard, then that standard should be stated with the utmost clearness and precision. When I am asked whether I am in favour of the policy of retaliation, I am obliged to make a very long speech in reply, explaining in what points I agree, and in what points I differ. It is exceedingly cruel to propound to the country, and to members of the Party, a policy the limits of which no one knows.

There are two points which I wish to see cleared up. First of all whether, in the view of the Government, it is premature to propose the taxation of food. What is the meaning of the word "premature?" Does it mean that it would be mature in a year, or three years, or at any time to which politicians need have no regard — say ten years? Does the House understand that the Government are pledged not to put a tax on food any time in these ten years? One still more important element in the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham is a duty averaging 10 per cent. on manufactured goods. Does the Government contemplate at any time supporting such a proposal as that? If I followed the Prime Minister's speech at Sheffield, I understand that my right hon. friend rejected that policy. But it is clearly a point that should be settled, for either the Government are in favour of it or they are against it. This particular policy involves the whole distinction between Protection and Free Trade. Surely when there is a violent feeling excited in the country, when Members are threatened with exclusion from Parliament, the House ought to be told whether this general duty of 10 per cent. is what they are required to assent to or not. The matter has got to a point at which dexterity becomes unfairness, and a clear and straightforward statement ought to be made, and I am quite certain, whatever may be the case with one or two Members, that a great many votes in the House will depend on the sort of declaration the Government will make.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I understand that the Government have no objection to adjourning earlier to-night than usual. I beg, therefore, to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. John Redmond*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

PRIVATE BILLS.

The CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS reported, That, in accordance with Standing Order 79, he had conferred with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining in which House of Parliament the respective Private Bills should be first considered, and they had determined that the Bills contained in the following List should originate in the House of Lords, viz.:—

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway.

Appleby Corporation Gas.

Barnard Castle Gas.

Barrow-in-Furness Corporation.

Barry Railway (Extension of Time, &c.).

Barry Railway (Steam Vessels).

Belfast and North East Ireland Electricity and Power Gas.

Belfast Corporation (Tramways).

Bexhill Corporation.

Bournemouth Corporation (Tramways).

Bridlington Corporation.

Bristol Corporation.

Bristol Tramways (Extensions).

Buxton Urban District Council.

Cambrian Railways.

Cardiff Railway.

Chesterfield Corporation Tramways and Improvements.

Chesterfield Gas and Water Board.

Coulsdon Tramways.

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power.

Derwent Valley Water Board.

Ebbw Vale Urban District Water.

Edwardes Square Protection.

Elysée Palace Hotel Company.

Filey Improvement.

Gosport Water.

Great Western Railway.

Great Yarmouth Corporation.

Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas.

Harrogate Waterworks Tramroad.

Holywood Tramways.

Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment).

Hutcheson's Hospital and Hutcheson's Educational Trust (Substituted Bill).

Ilford Urban District Council.

Ipswich Dock Commission.

Isle of Thanet Light Railways.

King's College Hospital.

Lancashire Electric Power.

Leeds Corporation (Waterworks) Railway.

Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power.

Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company.

Liverpool and Wigan Churches.

Llanelly Harbour.

London, Chatham, and Dover Railway.

Maidenhead Bridge.

Manchester Corporation (General Powers).

Manchester Corporation Tramways.

Manchester Ship Canal.

Manchester Ship Canal (Finance).

Matlock and District Gas.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

Metropolitan District Railway.

Metropolitan Railway.

Mid Cheshire Tramways.

Milwr and District Mines Drainage.

Minehead Urban District Council Water.

Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation.

Newcastle and Gateshead Water.

New River Company.

New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company.

North Wales Electric Power.

Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council.

Oakengates, Dawley, and District Joint Water Board.

Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway.

Preston and Blackburn Tramways.

Preston and Lytham Tramways and Tramroad.

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways.

Preston Corporation Water.

Saint Bartholomew's Hospital.

Saint Mary Woolnoth.

Shipley Urban District Council.

Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time).

South Staffordshire Mines Drainage.

Stretford Urban District Council.

Ticehurst and District Water and Gas.

Trafford Park Dock and Railway.

Tynemouth Corporation.

Tynemouth Gas.

Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads.

Ulster Electric Power.

Victoria University of Manchester.

Victoria University of Yorkshire.

Weaver Navigation (Additional (Finance).

Weaver Navigation (Constitution and Finance).

West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment).

West Metropolitan Railway (Extension of Time).

Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier.

West Riding Tramways.

Withnell Gas.

York Town and Blackwater Gas.

Adjourned at a quarter after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 3rd February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].

Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following cases, viz.:—

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway.
Appleby Corporation Gas.
Barnard Castle Gas.
Barrow-in-Furness Corporation.
Barry Railway (Extension of Time, etc.).
Barry Railway (Steam Vessels).
Belfast and North East Ireland Electricity and Power Gas.
Belfast Corporation (Tramways).
Bexhill Corporation.
Bournemouth Corporation (Tramways).
Bridlington Corporation.
Bristol Corporation.
Buxton Urban District Council.
Cambrian Railways.
Cardiff Railway.
Chesterfield Corporation Tramways and Improvements.
Chesterfield Gas and Water Board.
Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power.
Derwent Valley Water Board.
East Argentine Railway.
Ebbw Vale Urban District Water.
Edwardes Square Protection.
Elysée Palace Hotel Company.
Filey Improvement.
Gosport Water.
Great Western Railway.
Great Yarmouth Corporation.
Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas.
Harrogate Waterworks Tramroad.
Holywood Tramways.
Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment).
Hutcheson's Hospital and Hutcheson's Educational Trust (Substituted Bill).
Ipswich Dock Commission.
Isle of Thanet Light Railways.
King's College Hospital.
Lancashire Electric Power.
Leeds Corporation (Waterworks) Railway.
Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power.
Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company.
Liverpool and Wigan Churches.
Llanelly Harbour.
London, Chatham, and Dover Railway.
Maidenhead Bridge.
Manchester Corporation (General Powers).
Manchester Corporation Tramways.
Manchester Ship Canal.
Manchester Ship Canal (Finance).
Matlock and District Gas.
Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.
Metropolitan District Railway.
Metropolitan Railway.
Milwr and District Mines Drainage.
Minehead Urban District Council Water.
Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway.
Newcastle and Gateshead Water.
Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation.
New River Company.
New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company.
Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council.
Oakengates, Dawley and District Joint Water Board.
Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway.
Preston and Blackburn Tramways.
Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways.
Preston Corporation Water.
Saint Bartholomew's Hospital.
Saint Mary Woolnoth.
Shipley Urban District Council.
Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time).
South Staffordshire Mines Drainage.
Stretford Urban District Council.
Ticehurst and District Water and Gas.

Tynemouth Corporation.
Tynemouth Gas.
Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads.
Ulster Electric Power.
Victoria University of Manchester.
Victoria University of Yorkshire.
Weaver Navigation (Additional Finance).
Weaver Navigation (Constitution and Finance).
West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment).
West Metropolitan Railway (Extension of Time).
Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier.
West Riding Tramways.
Withnell Gas.
York Town and Blackwater Gas.

And they have certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in the following cases, viz.:—

Coulsdon Tramways.
North Wales Electric Power.
Trafford Park Dock and Railway.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not yet been complied with, viz.:—

Coulsdon Tramways [Lords].
North Wales Electric Power [Lords].
Trafford Park Dock and Railway [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—

Rotherham Corporation.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements).

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PETITIONS.

BEERHOUSES.

Petition from Newport, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

CHARYULU, BANDARU APPALA.

Petition of Bandaru Appala Charyulu, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

GOUNDEN, MUTHIA.

Petition of Muthia Gounden, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Cambuslang; Beith; Walbottle; Westerhope; Haltwistle; Liverpool; Rastrick; Highworth; Cheltenham; Manchester; Forest Hill; Greenhead; Greenock; Tideswell; Matlock; Goose Green; Horton; Port Glasgow; Samlet; Prudhoe; Allenheads; Boston; Dawley; Bedlington; Pemberton; Henshaw; Pelton Fell; Birtley; Strensall; Paisley (two); Dunston; Haxby; North Lonsdale; Swindon; Alston Cross; Nottingham; Kirkby; Alloa; Melton Mowbray; Chichester; Liverpool; Glasgow; Frosterley; Wolsingham; Garston; Northampton; West Auckland; Ouston; Chopwell; Clara Vale Tent; Washington; Parkstone; Verwood; High Bickington; West Woodburn; Heatherlands; Broomhill; Kennington; Alston; Beeston; South Lambeth; Oldham; Hoxton; Aston Park; Little Hulton; Seaton Burn; Dudley; Scotswood; Lower Broughton; Salford; Blyth (two); Collingbourne; Andrew Bryson and another; Northumberland; Barrington; Backworth; Fittleton; Southsea (two); Portsmouth (two); Buckland; Ammanford; Boston; Amble; Market Lavington; Wishaw; Hackworth; New Hirst; New Hartley; Altarnum; Davidstow; Trevadlock; Gunnislake; Egloskerry; Callington; Lezant; Leghill; Dennington; Gravesend; Scarborough (two); Luton; Apsley Guise; Warrington; Eston; Guisbro'; William Woolfries and another; Hawick; Shillingstone; Walford; Aston; Loughborough; Bristol; Portesham; Sunderland; Bridport;

Brixham; Gloucester; Juniper Green; Penryn; Widdrington; Bolton (eight); Middlesbrough; Chelston; Mitchell; St. Stephens; Padstow; Withill; Grampound Road; St. Austell; St. Dennis; Pendleton; Kennington; Jordanhill; Alloa; Tillicoultry; Islington; South Molton; Greetland; Elland; Sandbach; Salford Dock; Salford (two); Exmouth; Axminster; Hove Edge; Stourbridge; Brighouse; Malvern; Whiteinch; Halifax; Marnhull; Alnwick; Warrington; Chardstock; Leominster; St. Blazey; Sauchie; Halton-le-Gate; Dublin; Llanidan; Partick; Dreghorn; Stevenston; Devonport; London Auxiliary of the United Kingdom Alliance (two); Newcastle (four); Coleorton; Wansbeck; West Hartlepool (two); Cwmbran; Bournemouth (two); Winton; Christchurch; Muirkirk; Troon (two); Dalmellington; Glenbuck; Ayr; Auchinleck; Lugar (two); Girvan; Edinburgh (three); Risca; H. W. Garbutt and another; Shiney Row; Birkenhead (three); Alva; Rishton; Kelty; Markinch; Buckhaven; South Wingfield; Peak Dale; Bugsworth; Haggs; Grangemouth; Larbert; Laurieston; Lennoxtown; Carron; Blackbraes; Bonnybridge; Kilsyth; Milngarvie; Ivybridge; Clapham Park; Putney; Bradford (three); Salford; Hetton-le-Hole; New Lambton; Midhurst; Dundee (two); Lochee; Stockport; Cockermouth; Dittisham; Barnard Castle; Stanhope; New Hatcham; Southgate; Leytonstone; Riddings; Jesmond; Widnes; Inverness; Bolton-on-Dearne; Otley; Dukinfield; Old Hetton; Lancaster; Whitley Bay; Hucknall Torkard; Penistone; Birdwell; Crane Moor; Maryport; Stalybridge; Trowbridge; Bradford-on-Avon; Westbury; Salford; Ryhope; Chard; Cambois; Townhill; Cardenden; Cefn-canol; Meifod; Llanrhaiadr; Hernant; Llanfair Caereinion (two); Llandycwm; Carmel; Siloh; Rehoboth; Maengwynedd; Llanfyllin; Bridlington; Paul; Charlesworth; Glossop; Fairfield; Leicester; Great Meols; West Kirby; Wallasey; Seacombe; Ellesmere Port; Middlewich (two); Northwich (three); Barnton; Whitegate; Frodsham; Cullompton; Christow; Bristol; Oldham; Salisbury; Crewe; Perranwell; Goonhavern; Truro; South Petherton; Bampton and Huntsham; Dumfries (two); Annan; Sanquhar; Topsham; Whalley Range; Fence Houses; Thornaby on Tees; Withington; Dearham; Gotham; Mid Cheshire; Stirling; and Durham; to lie upon the Table.

NADAN, SIVASULRAMANIA.

Petition of Sivasulramania Nadan, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

RAMCHANDA, GANESH.

Petition from Ganesh Ramchanda, for inquiry into his case; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF GROUND RENTS AND VALUES.

Petition from St. Pancras, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for prohibition; from Bawtry; Taunton; Glastonbury; and Yeovil; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Copy presented, of Further Correspondence relating to the Affairs of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BARBADOS.

Copy presented, of Prison Rule relating to the Vaccination of Prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS, ENGLAND (FEES).

Copy presented, of Treasury Order, dated 30th December, 1903, regulating Court Fees in County Courts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House:—

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY).

Further Return, relative thereto [ordered 14th February, 1900; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 19.]

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND).

Copy ordered, "of Account of the Receipts and Payments of the Accountant General of the Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland, in respect of the Funds of Suitors in the said Court, including therein Funds to the credit of Lunacy Accounts, in the year to the 30th day of September, 1903; together with a Statement of Liabilities and Assets, and particulars of Securities in Court, on the 30th day of September, 1903."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*)

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FUND, 1902-3.

Copy ordered, "of Accounts of the Civil Contingencies Fund, 1902–3, showing (1) the Receipts and Payments in connection with the Fund in the year ended the 31st day of March, 1903; (2) the distribution of the Capital of the Fund at the commencement and close of the year, together with Copy of Correspondence with the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*)

NATIONAL GALLERY (REPORT).

Copy ordered, "of the Report of the Directors of the National Gallery for the year 1903, with Appendices."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*)

PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES (ELECTORS, &c.) (UNITED KINGDOM).

Address for "Return showing, with regard to each Parliamentary Constituency in the United Kingdom, the total number and, as far as possible, the number in each class of Electors on the register now in force; and also showing the Population and Inhabited Houses in each Constituency (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 34, of Session 1903)."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

TRADE AND NAVIGATION.

Copy ordered, "of Accounts relating to Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom for each month during the year 1904."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.

Return ordered, "of the number of Aliens that arrived from the Continent at Ports in the United Kingdom in each month of the year 1904."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Expenses of Military Operations beyond the Thibet Frontier.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary of State for India has any portion of the revenues of India been applied, during the past or the present year, to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of His Majesty's Indian possessions by His Majesty's forces charged upon such revenues; if so, what is roughly the amount of such revenues so applied; and what is the number of His Majesty's forces now employed beyond those external frontiers in Thibet.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) No portion of the revenues of India has been applied during the past or present year to the expenses of military operations beyond the external frontiers of His Majesty's Indian possessions. The numbers of the escort with the political mission to Thibet, and of the troops required to keep open communications, is about 3,000 men.

Distress in Ireland—Distribution of Seed Potatoes.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the failure of the crops, and the consequent distress in the West of Ireland, he will bring in a Bill enabling district councils to purchase and distribute seed potatoes among the small tenant farmers.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) It is unfortunately true that there has been a shortage in the yield of the crops in parts of Ireland due to the unfavourable climatic conditions that prevailed in the latter months of the past season, but it is not apprehended that the shortage is such as to lead to the occurrence of anything approaching exceptional distress. Although the potato crop was rather below the average it was by no means a failure, and I am advised by the Local Government Board that there are not sufficient grounds for introducing legislation with the object mentioned.

Compulsory Purchase in West of Ireland.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the terms demanded by landlords in the West of Ireland for the sale of their estates, and their effect on the resettlement of the people on the land in Connaught, he will bring in a Bill conferring compulsory powers of purchase on the Congested District Board and on the Estates Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The same question is raised in the Amendment to the Address standing in the name of the hon. Member for North Leitrim. I would prefer to postpone my reply until that Amendment is reached.

Chinese Labour in South Africa.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can inform the House as to the progress of the efforts made to import Chinese workmen into the Transvaal Colony; whether the Government have been consulted in the matter; and, if so, what decision, if any, the Government have come to regarding these proposals of the mine-owners.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I must refer the hon. Member to the Papers which are being published to-day.

Lord Curzon and the Governor-General of Shiraz.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury can any information be given respecting the recent incident at Bushire which induced Lord Curzon to leave that port without exchanging visits with the Persian Prince, Governor-General of Shiraz, who had arrived at Bushire to welcome him; had the form of ceremonial been arranged at Teheran between His Majesty's Minister and the Persian Government, and did Lord Curzon subsequently insist on such ceremonial being modified; has the course adopted by Lord Curzon been approved by His Majesty's Government; and can Papers be laid containing the Correspondence on the subject interchanged with the Persian Government as well as with Lord Curzon and His Majesty's Minister in Persia.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The form of ceremonial originally arranged between the Persian Government and His Majesty's Minister at Teheran was subsequently modified by the former in certain particulars before the Viceroy's arrival at Bushire. The desire and intention expressed by His Majesty the Shah of showing courtesy and hospitality to the Viceroy was unhappily frustrated owing to the arrangements locally made. His Majesty's Government share the regret of the Persian Government at an untoward incident which is now closed, and with regard to which it is therefore undesirable and unnecessary to lay any Papers.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

John Johnson, esquire, for the Borough of Gateshead.

BALLOT FOR BILLS AND MOTIONS.

Ordered, That no Bills, other than Government Bills, be introduced in anticipation of the ballot, and that all Members who desire to ballot, whether for Bills, or Motions for Tuesday, 9th February, and Tuesday, 16th February, and Wednesday, 10th February, and Wednesday, 17th February, do hand in their names at the Table during the sitting of the House on the first or second day of the session, and that a copy of such Notices be handed in, at the latest, during the sitting of the House on the third day of the session. That the ballot for the precedence of the said Bills and Motions be taken on the third day on which the House sits, at a convenient time and place, to be appointed by Mr. Speaker, and that the presentation of Bills on the fourth sitting day be taken as soon after Twelve o'clock as Mr. Speaker may deem convenient.—(*Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*)

CITY OF LONDON WRIT.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd February], "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a New Writ for the electing of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of London, in the room of the hon. Alban George Henry Gibbs, who, since his election for the said City, has undertaken a contract, with the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, for the public service."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said he had placed on the Paper notice of an Amendment which was in accordance with precedent, its object being to secure the appointment of a Select Committee of seven Members to consider whether Messrs. Vicary and Alban Gibbs were disqualified from sitting or voting as Members of the House under the Statute 22 Geo. 3, cap. 45. This Amendment was similar to the one moved in 1869 in the case of Sir Sydney Waterlow, who had given notice to the Speaker that he was a contractor to the Government. On that occasion the House did not accept the mere allegation of his contractorship as a matter about which there was no dispute, but it exercised its own discretion in the matter. Now he was making no imputation whatever on the Messrs. Gibbs; they were doing, no doubt, what they thought was right and proper. But the statute referred to in his Amendment was very specific. It said that no person, directly or indirectly, undertaking or enjoying the whole or any part of any contract made with the Commissioners of the Treasury, or generally on account of the public service, was disqualified from being elected to Parliament all such time he held such contract or any share thereof or received any benefit or emoluments arising therefrom. What had occurred in this case was that Messrs. Gibbs acted as brokers on behalf of the Chilian Government and executed a contract for the sale of two warships to the British Government. It was a very great question whether such a proceeding made them contractors under the provision he had quoted. There was no more difficult question to decide in law than the one affecting the relations of principal and agents. Even Messrs. Gibbs had considerable doubt as to their actual position, and Mr. Vicary Gibbs in one of his speeches said he did not know whether he was a contractor or not. He (Mr. MacNeill) had written a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer warning him that in accepting the resignation of Mr. Gibbs he would, under the circumstances, be exceeding his discretion in the matter of the Stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds. He could not trace a single instance in which a Member of the House of Commons, having entered into a contract with a Government Department, had been allowed to resign without the House exercising its own jurisdiction to find out whether he was a contractor or not. It was not enough for a man to write to Mr. Speaker saying "I am a contractor"; the question was one of the law and not of fact; it was an inference to be drawn from a long series of Acts. This was not a mere dilettante matter of Parliamentary formality, it was a question of the rights of the House, because it was necessary that transactions of a pecuniary nature between the Government and private Members should be brought under the cognisance of the House. He submitted it was absolutely necessary for the protection of the rights of Parliament that the House should itself decide whether or not Messrs. Gibbs were in the position of contractors. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'a Select Committee of seven Members be appointed to consider whether Mr. Vicary Gibbs and Mr. Alban Gibbs are disqualified from sitting or voting as Members of this House under the Statute 22 Geo. 3, c. 45, and to report their opinion thereon.'"—(*Mr. Swift MacNeill.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's) said the hon. Member who had raised this question had told them that the House ought to decide whether or not these gentlemen were contractors; but he had to maintain that the precedents cited by the hon. Member—those of Sir Sydney Waterlow and Baron Rothschild—were not analogous to the present case. The question that arose in the case of Baron Rothschild was whether he was qualified to retain his seat in the House because he had contracted for a Government loan, and whether such a proceeding amounted to a contract within the meaning of the Act. The Committee to whom the question was referred decided that he was not a contractor within the meaning of the Act, and that he was therefore qualified to retain his seat, and that decision was afterwards made clear by statute. In the case of Sir Sydney Waterlow there was a petition against his election in 1868 on the ground that he held a Government contract, but the petition was withdrawn, and the hon. Member sat during an autumn session. In the following year, however, the question was again raised, a Committee was appointed, and they reported that Sir Sydney Waterlow was disqualified, and that his seat was vacant. In both those cases there was a doubt whether any disqualification had occurred, and the Members, by retaining their seats, must be held to have disputed their disqualification. In other words, they were fighting against proposed disqualification, and desired to continue their membership of the House. That fact distinguished those cases from the present ones. In the present case two gentlemen, who were lately Members of the House, had admitted to the Speaker that they had accepted a contract, and that they were disqualified from sitting in the House, and in the usual course, a Motion had been made for the issue of new Writs to fill the vacancies caused by the forfeiture of their seats. They were anxious to resume the places which they had forfeited by accepting the contract. As had been stated by the hon. Member for South Donegal, there was no question of imputation against them; they had acted in perfect good faith and in a manner which reflected very great credit upon them. It must be remembered, too, that very grave questions were coming before Parliament, and it was most undesirable that at this juncture two important constituencies should be unrepresented. If a Committee were appointed, it might sit for a considerable time, and meanwhile the seats would remain vacant. No doubt the House always took great interest in questions affecting its honour and prerogatives, but in this case there could be no doubt that the action of the hon. Gentleman was perfectly *bonâ fide* and was based on the advice of the most distinguished counsel. He ventured to think in the circumstances that the Writs should issue, and that the House should not leave two important constituencies like the City of London and Mid Hertfordshire unrepresented at a time of very great importance like the present.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the electing of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the City of London, in the room of the hon. Alban George Henry Gibbs, who, since his election for the said City, has undertaken a contract, with the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, for the public service.

COUNTY OF HERTFORD (MID OR ST. ALBANS DIVISION) (WRIT).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd February], "That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the electing of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the County of Hertford (Mid or St. Albans Division) in the room of the hon. Vicary Gibbs, who, since his election for the said County, has undertaken a contract, with the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, for the public service."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Question again proposed.

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That Mr. Speaker do issue his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to make out a new Writ for the electing of a Member to serve in this present Parliament for the County of Hertford (Mid or St. Albans Division) in the room of the hon. Vicary Gibbs, who, since his election for the said County, has undertaken a contract, with the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, for the public service.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

SECOND DAY'S DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [2nd February].

"That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

Most Gracious Sovereign,—

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Question again proposed.

*MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I make no apology, Mr. Speaker, for intervening at the earliest possible moment to call the attention of Parliament to the Irish question, and to the well-nigh universal demand of the Irish people for a radical change in the system of government under which their country has been pauperised and depopulated in the past. I know that there are a great many people in this country, of all Parties, who quite naturally are anxious, if they can, to get rid of the Irish question even for a day, and I noticed with interest that in all the speeches made on the Address to the Throne yesterday not one solitary reference whatever was made by any speaker to Ireland. Now, I think that feeling is perfectly natural, but what does, I am bound to say, surprise me is that there seem to be serious statesmen on both sides of this House who seem to think it is possible to get rid of the Irish question. Greater delusion than this was never entertained. You cannot get rid of the Irish question. Nothing that you can do, either by the way of force on the one side or concession on the other, can relieve you from the necessary consequences of maintaining in Ireland a system of government opposed to the will of the governed. These consequences are chronic unrest and discontent in Ireland, and chronic disturbance here in the Imperial Parliament. The truth is, this problem is too vast, too far-reaching, and too urgent for it to be possible to cease even for a few short months to trouble the public mind in England, to intrude itself into the consideration of great English questions, and to haunt and disturb the serenity of the Imperial Parliament. At this moment all England is stirred by the fiscal question, and the British people are appealed to with passionate earnestness to save the Empire by conciliating the colonies. But every honest man must know that the conciliation of the colonies fades into insignificance compared with the importance of the conciliation of Ireland. We are told that there is no concession too great to be made for the purpose of buying the continued friendship of Canada and Australia. Why, Sir, for this purpose you are asked actually to uproot those great principles of fiscal policy which for fifty years you have all regarded as the very foundation of your greatness and prosperity, and you are told, at the same time and from the same quarter, to disregard altogether the hostility of Ireland, to make no sacrifice to win her friendship, though every man well knows that so long as Ireland's hostility to the Empire continues, so long all the talk about the unity of the Empire is mere clap-trap, and that Ireland contented, Ireland peaceful, Ireland friendly, would be of more value to the Empire than the possession of all the colonies put together. This question of discontent and disloyalty to the Empire in Ireland is one which I say you cannot get rid of for a single day. I noticed, with great interest, that quite recently the Duke of Devonshire solemnly declared that there was no room for two great questions like the fiscal question and the Irish question at the same time, and yet, within one week after that declaration, the Gateshead election took place, where, in spite of the votes of both English Parties, the issue in the end turned not upon protection or free trade, but upon Home Rule for Ireland, and was decided by the votes of Irish Home Rulers in the constituency.

Some men seem to think that because last year we obtained a valuable Act of Parliament remedying some of the evils of your past misgovernment, that therefore the Irish question would be heard of no more, that it was shelved. Such an idea argues an absolute ignorance of the very essence of this Irish question. No concession can weaken the force of our demand for self-government. On the contrary, every concession strengthens that demand and strengthens our arms, and every concession we have obtained, and every concession we may obtain will be used by us for the furtherance of the remainder of the contest for self-government. I read the other day a letter written by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Leeds, who is the chief Whip of the Liberal Party, to one of his constituents, in which he said—

> "So far as I am concerned I am a Home Ruler, but I have frequently said to my constituents that the Nationalist Party have accepted, at anyrate for the present, the alternative policy of the Conservative Party."

I read that statement with amazement. It disclosed to me a strange and, in the right hon. Gentleman, an utterly unaccountable inability to understand the real meaning of this Irish question. It was, as a matter of fact, an entire misrepresentation of our attitude. We accepted no alternative policy. We accepted the Land Act of last year just as we accepted the Land Act of 1881, just as we accepted the Local Government Act of 1898, just as we accepted every Act which has removed or mitigated any Irish grievance, and we would indeed be fools did we not do so. But to say we accepted any, or all, of these things as an alternative policy to Home Rule is absurd, and it is untrue, and this statement from a high official source like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Leeds, the Chief Whip of the Liberal Party, makes it necessary, in my opinion, for us to define our position once more, if not for the benefit of those who are the Government to-day, then for the benefit of those who hope to be the Government to-morrow—and who, for all I know, may be hugging the comfortable delusion at this moment that they can obtain Irish support on an alternative policy. Now I repeat that for us there is no such thing as an alternative policy to Home Rule. If your Government in Ireland were as good as it is notoriously and admittedly bad, we would be still Home Rulers. Our position is that we assert we have the right to rule ourselves. We certainly have the capacity and the knowledge, and the intimate sympathy which you have not, but above all that we say we have the right. That right we will never surrender, and we say without the slightest hesitation that Ireland would prefer to be governed even badly by her own Parliament than to be governed well by the Parliament of any other nation in the world. But we are not governed well. Your Government in Ireland not only springs from usurpation and wrong, from violence and corruption—which is denounced and admitted to-day by all your greatest writers and historians—it is not only a Government which depends every hour of its existence upon a small minority in Ireland, and is every hour of its existence in direct opposition to the will of the majority of the governed, but your Government, on its merits, is a bad Government, a wasteful, extravagant, corrupt, and inefficient Government.

We have heard a great deal in recent years from some distinguished quarters about inefficiency. Well, the English Government of Ireland is the most inefficient Government in the whole world. It is wasteful in every Department, it is corrupt in every Department. Perhaps I ought to stop for one moment to explain the meaning of "corrupt." I do not at all mean corrupt in the vulgar sense of bribing by money to do disgraceful things, although such things have happened. What I mean is—I put it in this way—the only class in Ireland that supports the Government is the class of the placemen. For the minority in Ireland, for every happy child who is born as a member of the loyal minority in Ireland, there is a place of some sort or kind. I am a member of the Irish Bar, and it is not likely I would make any disgraceful accusation against the Irish Bar, but I venture to assert there is not a member of the Irish Bar who is a supporter of the English Government, and an opponent of Ireland, who is not pretty certain, if he has any brains at all, before long to get a place. I say that is corruption, and I say it is true to say to-day in that sense, as was said by Mr. Lecky of the English Government, that the whole unbribed intellect of Ireland was against you. And I say, in addition to being wasteful and corrupt, the Government is inefficient. Let me give an example of what I mean. To-day, admittedly, Ireland lags behind every nation in Western Europe in trade, commerce, agriculture, in technical skill, in science, and in art. Why ? Is it because the Irish race are less talented than the people of any other race in the world ? Anyone who knows anything of the history of the world, and especially anyone who knows anything of the history of the British Empire, will make no such assertion. No ; Ireland lags behind in the race of nations because there is no nation in which education has been so denied, neglected, and starved. There is not any test of a Government better than this test of education, and I say the Government, which for a century has denied, neglected, and starved education, is a Government which cannot justify its existence before the public opinion of the world. That is what you have done in Ireland. First of all you denied education altogether,and made it a penal offence. Then you established a system of education which to-day has no parallel in the whole history of the world, and that system you maintain down to this moment.

Let me first take the case of primary education. I leave on one side what may be regarded as matters of ancient history. I deal to-day with the system in force at this very moment. The system of primary education in Ireland to-day came into existence so far back as the year 1831. Lord Stanley, then the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant, who, I think, was Lord Grey, formed a Board of unpaid gentlemen called a National Education Board, and the whole primary education of the country was put into the hands of these gentlemen, and that Board exists down to this very day unchanged except in one small particular from the year 1831. That Board is absolutely unrepresentative. It is absolutely irresponsible. From an educational point of view, as I will show you it is admittedly incompetent, and through its whole history it is anti-national in its feelings. The Board consists, I think, of sixteen members unpaid, and a paid Resident Commissioner. There is no qualification for membership on this Board at all. The only one essential condition is that it shall be half Catholic and half Protestant. At first I think only one-third of the Board was Catholic and two-thirds Protestant. This Board is made up of most worthy and estimable country gentlemen, country squires, country landlords. Five of the members of the Board are learned Judges, whose presence on the Board I cannot for the life of me understand, and others of them are officials who have retired from other departments of service, and, so far as anyone has ever been able to find out, not a single one of these men is selected for any educational qualification whatever. I do not want to weary the House, and therefore I would refrain from reading the names, but if anybody calls in question the accuracy of my description, I will read the names. There is Mr. Edmund Dease, a respectable landlord, Mr. James Morell, Sir Henry Ballingham, another most estimable landlord, Chief Baron Pallas, Judge Shaw, and so on right through the list. No one will controvert my assertion that there is no qualification required, and therefore this Board is totally unrepresentative. I say in addition it is irresponsible. No one represents this Board in this House. No one has authority to speak for that Board in this House. No one has authority over that Board in Ireland. Neither the Chief Secretary, nor any department of Dublin Castle, has any authority over this Board. We have repeatedly had experience in this House of the Chief Secretary rising to answer questions about primary education, and he has always complained of the fact that, although he was the channel to convey information to this House, he had no authority over this

Board, that the Board held its meetings in secret, and that when he applied for information they were perfectly entitled to deny the information if they chose. Was such an absurd system ever heard of as a Board of this character, responsible to no one in this House, nor to the Government in Ireland, or anyone else? The Board is anti-national and has been through its whole history. There is not amongst these Commissioners at this moment one single man who is in sympathy with the wishes and aspirations of the national feeling of the Irish people. Is it not ludicrous that a Board of this kind, charged with the duty of education of the little children of the Irish race, should not have one solitary representative of national feeling on its body. The natural result of that has been that the tendency of this Board all through has been to denationalise the little children of the Irish race. Irish history, Irish poetry, the Irish language, everything Irish has been banished from its schools. It was only the other day, after a bitter and vehement contest, that we were able to force this Board to allow the little Irish-speaking children coming out of Irish-speaking homes to be taught through the medium of the Irish language. I would like to quote a few words written by Mr. Starkie, the present Resident Commissioner, the paid servant of this Board, as to the merits of his employers. He says—

> "I fancy few practical educationists will deny that the National Board were guilty of a disastrous blunder in thrusting upon a Gaelic-speaking race a system of education produced after a foreign model, and utterly alien to their sympathies and antecedents. Such an attempt was unsound, both philosophically and practically. Neglecting the principles of continuity which pervades all human things, it disregarded the home training and associations of the children, and thus rending in twain the nascent intelligence, rendered all real development impossible. True education is a refining and developing of the whole intellectual life and character, and I think there can be little doubt that the Board were guilty of narrow pedantry in neglecting as worthless the whole previous life of the pupil, and the multitude of associations, imaginations, and sentiments that formed the content of his consciousness. The consequences of such a system are inevitable. To this unhappy blunder may be attributed the want of initiative, and independence and distaste of knowledge, which so hampers the industrial development of Ireland—qualities so alien to the quick sympathies and alert intelligence, which are the most salient characteristics of our race."

Thus, Sir, the administration of this Board has been, from an educational point of view, narrow and incompetent even on the authority of their own Resident Commissioner, and from an Irish point of view has been grossly anti-national. I do not care to go into the question further than to point out that whatever may be the case to-day, when this Board was established it was run from a religious point of view on bigoted and most dishonest lines. That can be proved by referring to the declaration of Archbishop Whateley, when he declared in so many words that the object of the Board was to proselytise the Catholic children of Ireland. He said—

> "The education supplied by the National Board is gradually undermining the vast fabric of the Irish Roman Catholic Church. I believe, as I said the other day, in mixed education (as carried out in the system of the National Education Board) we give up the only hope of weaning the Irish from the abuses of Popery. But I cannot venture openly to profess this opinion."

This quotation is taken from a diary of the Archbishop, which of course did not see the light for many days after it was written. Under the blessings of English rule you have primary education in the hands of a Board established in 1831, entirely unrepresentative, absolutely irresponsible, anti-Catholic in its inception, anti-national down to this moment, so incompetent that it is denounced and condemned by its own Resident Commissioner, and so incapable of reform that Archbishop Walsh resigned his position on that Board in absolute despair. No wonder that this system of education is to-day unanimously denounced by the people of Ireland, and no wonder that Ireland lags behind the nations of the world in all the essentials of prosperity and advancement. What is the remedy? The only possible remedy is Home Rule. This antiquated, irresponsible, unrepresentative, narrow-minded, bigoted, and incompetent Board must be swept into the dust bin. It would not be tolerated in England for twenty-four hours. What we want is a Department of Education responsible to the public opinion of Ireland. That is the only possible remedy, but it is not possible so long as Ireland is deprived of the right of self-government. To abolish the Board, as he had heard some people suggest, and to put their absolute power into the hands of a new ring of irresponsible officials in Dublin Castle, would be to alienate still more the confidence of the Irish people. We want a Department of Education responsible to the public opinion of Ireland, and this we cannot have until we have self-government. And so the disgraceful and ruinous tragedy of the neglect of Irish primary education goes on.

The same story is true of intermediate education. Many members of the Intermediate Education Board are eminent men, but none of them can be picked out as educational authorities or as qualified for the work upon which they are engaged. For twenty years the Intermediate Board had full control of intermediate education, and they carried on a system of cramming and payment by results to such an extent that they did irreparable injury to the education of the youth of the country. But at last the people cried shame upon them, and they had to admit their failure. With a touch of true Gilbertian humour, they resolved themselves into a Commission to inquire into the defects of their own work. Since then there has been some improvement, but so recently as the 1st of April last year the Chief Secretary declared that under the present system the money devoted to intermediate education was money thrown away.

> "Money," said he, "has been lavished in Intermediate Education in Ireland. . But how can such expenditure be turned to good account when Elementary Education is not levelled up to the necessary standard, when only 55 per cent. of the children attend the schools, and when continuation schools do not exist? Money devoted to Intermediate Education under such circumstances is money thrown away."

If that be the state of inefficiency of the Government of Ireland in primary and intermediate education, if that be the disgraceful story of the neglect and starvation of the education of Irish children in primary and intermediate schools, what is to be said about the question of Irish University education? The inefficiency of the Government in this vital matter, its dishonest evasion of an admitted duty, its unwillingness or incapacity, or both, to remove an admitted grievance which poisons the whole life of Ireland, and which condemns Ireland to hopeless failure in the struggle with the nations of the world for existence—I say the treatment of this question by the Government, taken alone, is sufficient to utterly and completely damn and condemn their whole system of the government of the country. For fifty years this grievance has been admitted, and every attempt made to deal with it has failed for the same reason that has destroyed every effort of this House to deal with Irish grievances, namely, because it was an effort made by men who did not understand the requirements of Ireland, and who would not listen to the advice of the Irish people. You establish first a Queen's University, Queen's Colleges, in Ireland. They were denounced by O'Connell in the name of the Catholic laity, and by the Irish Bishops on behalf of the clergy. Their failure is admitted, and the Queen's University is dead and gone. In disregard of Irish advice, you then establish an Examining Board, which you dignify by the name of a Royal University. After twenty years your Royal Commission has declared that this Royal University also is a failure, and must go. You of the Conservative Party, representing a Conservative Government, pledged yourselves publicly and privately to deal with this question year after year, and session after session, until your pledges on this subject have become a by-word in Ireland. In 1885, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was then Leader of the House, explicitly and solemnly pledged the Government that if they were in office next session they would introduce a practical measure to remedy this grievance. They were in office "next session," and with the exception of three years they have been in office ever since, and that pledge has never been redeemed. In 1889, in answer to Mr. Parnell in this House, the present Prime Minister pledged himself on behalf of the Government to produce a Bill dealing with this question next session.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover) dissented.

* MR. JOHN REDMOND: In August, 1889, Mr. Parnell questioned Mr. Balfour on this subject, and asked whether any immediate steps were in contemplation, and whether the Government proposed to make this important subject one of

the earliest Government measures next session, and in reply Mr. Balfour said—

> "With regard to the question put to me by the hon. Member for Cork, I have to say that there is, of course, no possibility of dealing with this question except under a Bill, and I cannot give any pledge at this moment as to the exact order in which the various questions will be dealt with by the Government next session."

The right hon. Gentleman then speaking on behalf of the Government as Leader of this House—[AN HON. MEMBER: As Chief Secretary]—well, that gives more point to what I was going to say. He spoke then as Chief Secretary, and it might be said that he spoke for himself, and not in the name of the Government, that really he was outstepping the limits of his authority, and that he had no right to make such a declaration. But the right hon. Gentleman is now Prime Minister, and I want to know by what rule of morality he can now refuse when he has authority, when he is Leader of this House and Prime Minister of this country—how he can justify the refusal to carry out those pledges which he gave. From 1885 to this moment those pledges have remained unfulfilled. The truth is, that the Conservative Party are playing with this question and fooling with it, and they have found it, I am afraid, somewhat useful to them in dealing with Irish Parties. They are doing the same to-day. Lord Dunraven the other day published a letter in the Irish newspapers, in which he formulated a scheme for the settlement of this question. Now that scheme was represented to us in Ireland as the Government scheme. That was put forward as representing the Government scheme. We were told, in addition, that that scheme would receive the support of the Ulster Presbyterians, because they are very closely interested in this matter. Part of the scheme was to make Queen's College, Belfast, one of the component colleges of the University of Dublin, and, of course, to give large endowments to Queen's College, Belfast, so as to bring it into a proper position to meet the needs of that great city. We were told that the Ulster Presbyterians were favourable to this scheme. Well, what about the Catholics? I took it upon myself, speaking to my constituents a few weeks ago, to say that in my judgment the scheme would have been accepted by both the hierarchy and laity of the Catholic Church any time for the last twenty years. They have the whole Irish Government unanimously in favour of it. The Chief Secretary, the Lord Lieutenant, and Sir Antony M'Donnell. I do not know which is the more eager and enthusiastic on this question. They have the Prime Minister of England in favour of it. According to statements that have been made, they have a very large section of the Cabinet in favour of it. Some of the statements represent that an overwhelming majority of the Cabinet were in favour of it, and yet because Lord Londonderry goes down to Belfast and addresses a meeting of rabid Orangemen, and says that he will oppose this scheme, it is to put on one side. The whole question once more is to be shelved.

Now I may be told that there are great difficulties in the way of that scheme. Not only Lord Londonderry and his friends, but certain Senior Fellows of Trinity College, Dublin, are opposed to it. Let me say to the right hon. Gentleman that we are not wedded to this particular scheme. If the right hon. Gentleman finds it easier to fall back on the scheme of the Royal Commission, well let him do so, and that will be candidly, fairly, and impartially considered by us. What he has no right to do is to attempt to shelve this question and to hang it up indefinitely. Now I will be perfectly plain and straightforward on this matter. I think I quite see through the Government's game. My honest belief—I do not say it personally to the right hon. Gentleman, and let him not take it to himself individually; I am speaking of the Government—I am firmly convinced that they intend to humbug and befool the Irish Members on this question. Lord Londonderry, I believe, was right when he said in Belfast that no responsible Minister had ever proposed a Catholic University. Nobody has said that it was to establish a Catholic University. That is not the scheme. There is no proposal to establish a Catholic University. A correspondent writes to Lord Londonderry and says that the phrase was equivocal, and that while his Lordship might be against a Catholic university he might be in favour of Lord Dunraven's scheme. He asked for a specific reply on Lord Dunraven's scheme.

What was the answer? A letter in yesterday's London *Times*, in which Lord Londonderry said that no responsible Minister—we were told that this thing was to be submitted to the Cabinet; apparently it has not—that no responsible Minister had ever made such a proposal as Lord Dunraven's scheme. I think Lord Londonderry was right when he said in a speech in Belfast that the Government, as a whole, has no intention, and never had any intention, of introducing a scheme for the settlement of this question, and that all their pledges, assurances, and promises, were false as dicers' oaths. But they want to remain in office for the rest of this session, and, no doubt, these mysterious negotiations about which we have all heard a great deal in months past in Ireland—all these private assurances about the Cabinet, about the Government, and about this scheme, and that scheme, and all the public pledges—I suppose we will have a repetition of these again to-night—were simply intended for the purpose of inducing the Irish Members to refrain from attack. More than that, I fancy that when the Government go to the electors when the general election does come, they would like very much to have these pledges about a Catholic university in the air, so that they might successfully attempt to wheedle and humbug the Irish voters in Great Britain to vote for their candidates in every case, in the supposition that they were in favour of a Catholic University. Let me tell the Government perfectly plainly that their game is too transparent in this matter. It has been played too often, and it will fail this time. The Irish people are saying to the Government to-day—

And be these juggling fiends no more believ'd,
That palter with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope.

To-night I call on the right hon. Gentleman for an explicit statement on this matter. Let us get out of this region of fog. Let us get out of this region we have been living in in Ireland of private negotiations and private indications that this person was favourable and that person favourable, and that everything would go right before the end of the session. Let us come down to the plain facts. What is the right hon. Gentleman going to do? I think I ought to make an explicit statement to him, and I say that, on this question of the settlement of the University question, nothing short of the immediate introduction of legislation this session will satisfy us. We thus have three branches of education—primary, intermediate, and University—marked by the same inefficiency under English rule in Ireland. Now I ask any impartial man whether the case for Home Rule is not complete if I stopped here, and did not say one other word. The Government which, for a whole century, has thus bungled, neglected, and starved education—primary, secondary, and university—cannot justify its existence.

But after all, education, vital as it is, is only one department or element in the national life of our country. In every other department the inefficiency is the same. The same ignorance, the same dishonesty, the same failure. Take for instance the case of the financial relations between the two countries. You are niggardly of education in Ireland, but you are prodigal of taxation. Ireland some years ago accused Great Britain of robbing her of several millions a year, and that accusation became so insistent that you were forced to investigate it. A tribunal was appointed for the purpose. Now let the House mark, Great Britain was the defendant, Great Britain appointed the tribunal herself, Great Britain packed the tribunal herself with all her own greatest financial authorities. Yet that tribunal so appointed and constituted brought in a verdict in favour of Ireland, a verdict to the effect that Ireland was overtaxed to the extent of about £3,000,000 a year, and that that had gone on for half a century. That was in 1893-4. Since then, so far from relief having been given, £3,000,000 additional has been put upon Ireland, and in the most cruel way, because it has been added almost entirely to the taxation of the poor. You in this country have been engaged, and you boasted of it, in the task of endeavouring to bring down indirect taxation at any rate to the level of direct taxation. But you did not do so in Ireland. The indirect taxation of Great Britain is nearly 50 per cent. of the whole. In Ireland it is 75 per cent. of the whole, and every addition you have made to the burden of Ireland for the last ten years has been a burden that has fallen upon the poorer classes of the community. When the result of the Financial Relations Inquiry was first made known, your answer was that the inquiry had not been sufficiently full, that there were other portions of the case to be considered, and you said a new Commission was to be appointed. You have not since appointed that Commission and you never suggested it since, and you have gone on, during all those ten years that have passed, piling up the taxation of the country; and the last defence made to this House by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer a couple of years ago, was of the most audacious character. He said the general taxation of the whole of the three countries has been enormously increased in consequence of the war. Ireland being the poorest part of the United Kingdom has contributed the smallest proportion of this general taxation, "Therefore," he said, "your grievance has disappeared." Of course, according to that doctrine, all you have to do is to go on increasing the taxation of Ireland, and when you have added three or four or five millions more to her taxation, your Chancellor will say, "Why, I have wiped out all your grievance." I am bound to say the Chief Secretary does not take that view at all. I heard with deep gratification some of his declarations last year. I remember when he used these words—

> "He really believed Ireland had been a sufferer, and he was quite sure that the question whether or not the two countries had received as partners in the common Exchequer, founded in 1813, their fair share of the mutual advantages was a question which should not be left in obscurity as now."

Yes, it is left in obscurity now, and I say it is a monstrous injustice that while this question is being hung up in this way, and after the verdict of the late Commission, you should go on piling up the general burden on Ireland. Not only has the general burden been increased, but in every conceivable way Ireland is being cheated every year by the British Treasury. Let me take one example of what I mean. When the equivalent grants were first established, the principle was laid down by Mr. Goschen that Scotland and Ireland were entitled to get from the General Exchequer a proportionate sum for their purposes. And the proportion was fixed by Mr. Goschen at eighty for England, eleven for Scotland, and nine for Ireland. We always, on these Benches, protested against that proportion; we have always said that it was grossly unfair, but we were powerless in the matter. Last year the Chief Secretary came to our aid when in this House he declared that we were right all through, that the proportion was quite unfair, and he proposed quite a different basis, which he put into the Irish Development Fund Bill. Speaking on this question, he said—

> "On other similar occasions, in 1889 and 1890, I think the equivalent grant to Ireland and to Scotland (England, eighty; Scotland, eleven; and Ireland, nine) was calculated upon the proportion of taxation coming from Ireland or Scotland to the common Exchequer. That leads to results which all must hold to be illogical, and results which everybody in Ireland holds to be unjust, because the greater the increase of the taxation the less is the proportion that comes from Ireland, the poorest partner in the business, and so the less is her equivalent grant. As the evil increases the remedy diminishes, and you have only to force up taxation to a sufficiently high point to extinguish the remedy altogether, or to give it in what may be called homeopathic doses. Therefore we make this new departure. We say that the set-off to Ireland shall be calculated, not upon the quota coming from Ireland, as compared with the quota coming from England, towards common purposes, but shall be calculated on the population of the two countries as revealed by the last census."

I do beg the House, which is often carried away with the idea that we on these Benches are given to exaggeration, to listen to how this system of equivalent grants has worked out. Take, for example, the question of technical instruction—

> "What are the results? In the nine years, in the case of England, between 1892 and 1900, sums amounting to £6,276,404 were devoted to technical instruction in England and Wales. Ireland lost two years altogether in that period, but in the remaining seven years she was only able to spend £71,900 on technical instruction, and out of that comparatively insignificant sum no less than £55,000 was expended in the last year."

That is to say, Ireland has been robbed by that transaction of a vast sum of money in connection with grants for technical education.

> "Ireland had to dash down the money on some ill-considered project or lose it altogether."

It was to remedy this that a policy of setting up the Devolution Fund Grant was initiated so that Ireland should not be defrauded of its fair share of the grant from the common Exchequer of the United Kingdom, and it was to protect Ireland that the Chief Secretary felt it his duty to adopt the new fiscal method. Now if the basis for the equivalent grants in 1889 and 1890, namely, 80–11–9, was unjust, as it is now admitted to be, we have been robbed every year that has passed of large sums of money, which by now amount to a vast figure; and mark the injustice is a continuing one, for the admitted unjust basis remains in force with reference to all equivalent grants before the one of last year. In my opinion that is a good instance of the way in which not only is the general burden of the taxpayers heaped up in Ireland, but where in every individual case that is possible, the British Exchequer robs Ireland of her fair share of grants from common taxation. We are robbed therefore not only in education but in money. And what of the legislative work? Every year in the last century this Parliament has proved its incapacity or unwillingness, or both, of passing legislation satisfactory to Ireland. Let me take as an example the Land Act of last year. On that question this Parliament passed some forty or fifty Land Acts, but so ignorant was this Parliament of the task and of the real meaning of the problems which it had to grapple with; so incompetent was it for the task of governing Ireland; so deaf was it to the voice of the Irish Members, that all these forty or fifty Acts of Parliament were absolutely valueless, and last year you found yourselves confronted with the Irish land question once more in an acute phase. And believe me, you are not yet done with the question. Last year I most freely admit Parliament was anxious and willing to settle this great question, and I say that the failure of the Act of last year in so many respects proves in a startling manner that even when this Parliament has the will and provides the necessary time, it has not the capacity to legislate satisfactorily for Ireland, What happened last year? The Irish Members put forward certain Amendments which they considered, in their judgment, were essential in order to make it a workable and a satisfactory measure. Some of these Amendments were opposed on their merits as mischievous by the Government, and they were defeated. Other of these Amendments, which we declared to be absolutely necessary for the proper and effective working of the Bill, were declared by the Government to be unnecessary, and we were induced to withdraw them by pledges from the Ministers and from the law officers of this House that the phraseology of the Bill, as it stood, carried out our intention. And what has been the ludicrous result? Why, an Irish Judge has already given a decision—and those who followed the Bill with any interest last year will see the force of what I am saying—to the effect that the bonus cannot be handed over to the tenant for life. That blocks out, in my judgment, something like three-fourths of the landlords of Ireland; and the Irish law officer who sat on that Bench opposite during the discussions on that Bill, who heard the Chief Secretary making all his speeches and giving all his promises, and making those statements which induced us to withdraw our Amendments, have now on other portions of the Bill, given opinions totally at variance with the opinions of the Chief Secretary and which, if enforced, will, in the judgment of most men who know anything of Ireland, render the Act an absolute nullity so far as Connaught and the congested estates are concerned. That is to say that they will make the Act of last year worthless as an engine of peace in those very places where the land agitation has been most acute. What an argument for Home Rule! What answer is to be given to it? I admit that last year you did your best; you were anxious to settle the land question, but you would not listen to our advice; you would not take our Amendments, and you have floundered once again into hopeless failure on many phases of this question. The whole question of the working of the Land Act will come up for discussion at a later period, and therefore what I have to say on that subject I will reserve till then. So far as I am concerned for the moment, I only allude to the Land Act as an illustration of my argument, which is that nothing can be satisfactory in the government of Ireland except the restoration of the rights of self-government to the Irish people. I take it for granted that the Chief Secretary will introduce an amending Bill this session, although no mention is made of it in the King's Speech. All I can say is that so far as we are concerned no so-called amending Bill will be accepted by us unless it deals with all the defects which have been disclosed in the Act from the point of view of the tenants, as well as from the point of view of the tenant for life and the landlords.

Now I might go through every other department of Irish government. I might deal with the Irish Local Government Board—the most absurd system of government in the world—where you have freely elected governing bodies of the people thwarted and interfered with at every stage by a body which is quite irresponsible, and over which the people of Ireland have no control at all, and in the membership of which is Mr. Richard Bagwell, who was appointed after the Act of 1898 was passed, a gentleman who signalised his appointment by instantly denouncing as an outrage the right of the people of Ireland to local government, which he was appointed to administer. I might deal with the Board of Works, where the right hon. Gentleman has placed his late private secretary, Mr. Hanson, as one of the three administrators of this important Irish Department. I have nothing to say against Mr. Hanson. He has served the right hon. Gentleman well. I always found him most courteous, obliging and competent, and I am sure that he is a very able young man. But, after all, is this a system of government which will stand examination: that those young English gentlemen who have served for two years as private secretaries are to be brought over from England and put in charge of a great working department of Irish government to the absolute exclusion of Irishmen. I might go through all these departments one after the other, and show the failure of English government. This system which I have endeavoured to sketch cannot be mended; it is too rotten to be mended; the only remedy is to end it. "I say the time has come to reform altogether the absurd and irritating anachronism which is known as Dublin Castle; to sweep away altogether these alien boards of foreign officials, and to substitute for them a genuine Irish Administration for purely Irish affairs." These are the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. What has changed since 1885 to make these alien boards of foreign officials more competent for the government of Ireland than they were then? No, if there has been any change it has been in the other direction. It has been in this, that our demand for Home Rule is stronger to-day than it was then. Why in 1898 you gave a great system of free local government to the people, such as you have in England. You gave it with fear and trembling. Lord Salisbury had warned you that it was more dangerous to do that than to give Home Rule. Yet you granted it. What has been the result? Why, that the Irish people in the working of that Act have shown, untrained though they are in the arts of government, the steadiness, the sobriety, the moderation, and the good sense which are necessary for the successful work of governing themselves. I ask the Government, where do they stand upon this question? Has their experience taught them nothing? Have they learned nothing from their experience of the last few years in the softening of class animosities, in the hope which they have often expressed, and which I am sure they share, of the early settlement of the land question, in the hope of the spread of better feelings in Ireland, and of the possibility of a really united Ireland? Do they really see no possibility of meeting this natural demand of an intelligent people to be allowed to govern themselves—to govern themselves where you have shown your incapacity to govern them? Can we take Lord Dudley as representing the Government? Lord Dudley is an able man. He has made some most remarkable pronouncements in Ireland. Speaking on the 20th November, 1902, he said—

> "There were those who seemed to believe that the only way in which a great Empire could be successfully maintained was by suppressing the various distinguishing elements of its component parts—in fact, by running it as a huge regiment in which each nation was to lose its own individuality, and to be brought under a common system of discipline. That was not his view. In his opinion, they were much more likely to break up an Empire by any such attempt. Lasting strength and loyalty were not to be secured by any attempt to force into one system or to mould into one type those special characteristics which

were the outcome of a nation's history, but rather by a full recognition of the fact that those very characteristics formed an essential part of the nation's life, and that under wise guidance and sympathetic treatment they would enable her to play her own special part in the life of the Empire to which she belonged. It was upon that principle that he would proceed during his term of office, believing that any national development to be lasting or healthy must be spontaneous."

Again, he said—

> "The opinion of the Government was, and it was his own opinion, that the only way to govern Ireland properly was to govern it according to Irish ideas instead of according to British ideas."

What is the meaning of these words? In the ordinary acceptation of the meaning of language those words mean Home Rule, and they were so interpreted in Ireland. Were they that, or simply one more attempt by playing on words to deceive the people? Let me say for myself that I utterly decline to believe that, so far as Lord Dudley is personally concerned. But I am dealing, not with Lord Dudley, but with the Government policy in this matter. I ask, where do the Government stand upon this question? Our position is perfectly plain. We are a Party of independent opposition. We are in opposition to every Government that does not accede to our demand for legislative freedom. For myself, I have sat in opposition in this House for twenty-three years. I have taken part in the overthrow by Irish votes of Conservative Governments and of Liberal Governments. I know not, of course, what the future may have in store for us, but I have a pretty clear conception of what our duty is. In my judgment, it is our duty to offer a vigorous and active opposition to the Government unless they show that they have made some appreciable advance on the road to Home Rule. My colleagues and I have been for many weary years travelling on a long and painful road. Many of us have grown old and grey through years of disappointment and disillusion. If we have to go on to our graves without success we will do so ungrudgingly, and bequeath this contest to our children. Let me say, however, for myself that I am fairly sanguine of the near future. I think I see in this country a widening of knowledge of Ireland a growing appreciation of the real character of the Irish people and of the moderate nature of their demands, and therefore I decline to say one word or to give one vote which, in my opinion, is calculated to make it more difficult for any English Party or any English Government to end this contest by some great measure of appeasement and justice, which, when it comes, believe me, will be as great a blessing to Great Britain as it will be to the long-suffering and faithful people of Ireland. Never forget that you can, by the mere concession of justice, convert Ireland in twenty-four hours into a friendly nation only too eager for what Gladstone called "the blessed oblivion of the past." But by the continuation of injustice you perpetuate a history of hatred and ill-will between two democracies who ought in God's providence to live side by side in amity and peace. It is for you to choose.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. and learned Member for Waterford has spoken with that eloquence which is always at his command on the subject which I believe is nearest to his heart. We know, not only from what he has said to-night, but from what he has said again and again in previous debates, that, in his opinion, no efforts which we make in this House to further the advancement of the people of Ireland are of avail, and that nothing but the concession of a Parliament with the fullest power to that country can remedy any of the evils under which Ireland may suffer. He has been very frank. In his courtesy he sent me formal notice that he intended to raise the whole question of Irish government, and he has been as good as his word. Not one Department has escaped his scathing criticism.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Oh yes, several.

MR. WYNDHAM: As far as I am personally concerned as the head of nearly all these Departments, I do not propose to blow my own trumpet for an hour and a half; but, speaking for those with whom I work, for my colleagues on the Local Government Board and every other Department with which I am officially connected, I repudiate the epithets which the hon. and learned Member has thought fit to apply to those hardworking public servants. They are not English. They are not foreigners. They are all Irishmen.

*MR. JOHN REDMOND: Is Mr. Stephenson an Irishman? Is Mr. Hanson an Irishman? Are you an Irishman?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am excluding myself. I am speaking for my colleagues in those Departments. Sir Henry Robinson, Vice-President of the Local Government Board, is an Irishman, Sir Horace Plunkett, the Vice-President of the new Department, is an Irishman, and taking the Department of the Board of Works, Mr. Holmes, the Chairman, is an Irishman, and so I might go on. Irishmen bear the far greater proportion. It is a small point, but so much has been said about foreign rule that we had better clear the matter up. The hon. and learned Member mentioned Mr. Hanson. Why was he appointed? Mr. Hanson was appointed because he was the most competent person to go there, and I was very sorry to lose his services. He was not appointed at my instance. What is the Board of Works? The Board of Works is under the Treasury in Ireland, and it is the channel through which Ireland receives the greatest benefits she receives under the Union. During the last ten years the Board of Works has advanced, by way of gift or loan to Ireland for Irish purposes, over £7,000,000. Is it an intolerable outrage on the national feeling of Ireland that one man selected by the Treasury as peculiarly competent to deal with financial transactions should be an Englishman, though he was the man, in their opinion, who was best fitted to discharge the functions? The whole of the contention falls to the ground, and the fact that Mr. Hanson was my private secretary in Ireland for three years, and had in that position obtained a wonderful grasp of Irish problems, was an additional recommendation. The hon. and learned Member began by saying it was a delusion to suppose that we are to get rid of the Irish question. I have never shared in that delusion. I have spent five years of my life as private secretary to the Prime Minister in Ireland, and I have been three years Chief Secretary, and I know how important are many matters in Ireland which require, deserve, and, in my opinion, receive attention in this House. But the hon. and learned Member in his concluding period said the legislative efforts of this House were not satisfactory to Ireland. I am not surprised, if he puts the Irish demand as he put it to-night. All the desires which he has cherished in the past, including Home Rule, are apparently to be granted, and satisfactorily and exhaustively granted, in the course, one might almost say, of a single session. Does he suppose England at the end of every year says, "Now, Heaven's blessing fall upon these God-inspired Ministers; we cannot have a single thing in addition to what we already possess?" There is no country in the world so satisfied with its Government as he thinks his countrymen ought to be satisfied with ours, if we did our duty.

The purport of the hon. and learned Member's speech was perfectly clear; in the latter part he wished to bring home to the Government, and in the earlier part to the Opposition, the fact that he is the head of a real third Party in this House, of an independent Party. I surmised that that was his intention almost as soon as he began to speak, and my surmise was confirmed by his very pointed allusion to a recent speech made by the hon. Member for Leeds. He stands here to ask that which we stand here to refuse, a separate Parliament for Ireland, and he says until that is granted to Ireland no legislation passed by this House can meet Irish needs. Some might hastily be tempted to ask in reply, "In that case, what is the use of attempting to legislate for Ireland?" That is not my position; far from that. The hon. and learned Member spoke of our legislative attempt as a concession; I take grave exception to that. I have never since I have been in the House of Commons supported, or initiated in recent years, any measure for Ireland with any idea in my mind that I was asking any Irish Member not to offer his views on the Constitutional problem. I have not brought in these measures, or supported them in earlier years, with a view of "killing Home Rule with kindness," or of reconciling the irreconcilable. I asked my friends last year to support me in passing the Irish Land Act, because I thought it was our duty to pass that measure for Ireland. I have supported Unionist legislation upon what I conceive to be the platform of the Unionist creed, and that is, that we are political equals with equal claims on the time of Parliament and the resources of the common Exchequer.

Mr. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): Have we got anything in return for the Land Act?

Mr. WYNDHAM: My hon. friend who differed from me as to the policy of the Government last year, will hardly expect me to repeat all the arguments I used in our numerous debates. I think I made my position perfectly clear. I believed that that Act would confer great benefits on Ireland, and at a later moment I will return to that point. But I never asked the House, nor did the Prime Minister, to pass that Act in order that the hon. and learned Member should not get up, if he sees fit to do so, and declare that he is still a Home Ruler; and, what is more, I should never consider such a transaction as at all honourable, in the primary sense of the word honourable. The Irish Party are here this afternoon, as they have been on many previous occasions, as an independent Party. I have no understanding with the Nationalist Party, led so ably by the hon. and learned Member, over any prospective legislation. My aim is more modest, my aim is to avoid misunderstandings with the Irish Nationalist Party, and with every other section of political belief in Ireland, and amongst my friends on this side of the House. And to avoid misunderstandings, two courses must be pursued; I must refrain, as I always seek to do, from using any word that might give umbrage to the legitimate pride of Irishmen in their nationality, a pride which they share with Englishmen and Scotchmen, but I must also refrain from indulging in rosy and ambiguous periods which might lead them to believe that I was prepared to concede Home Rule, or contribute £3,000,000 a year for Irish purposes. What has happened in recent years? Last year or the year before, on the Address, the hon. and learned Member moved an Amendment dealing with the land question, which was a pressing matter in Ireland. When we did not deal with it in 1901, and when we did not succeed in carrying a measure in 1902, the hon. and learned Member denounced us; last year he co-operated with the Government in passing a measure. But before those years he made an annual appearance in this House, moving an Amendment in the sense in which he has spoken this afternoon.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: In the twenty-three years I have been in the House I only did that once.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I think the hon. and learned Member is in error, I think he did so in 1898 and 1899.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Perhaps I did twice, but that would scarcely justify the phrase "annual appearance."

Mr. WYNDHAM: In 1895, 1898, and 1899 the hon. and learned Member came to this House and moved as an Amendment to the Address that there should be an independent Parliament given to Ireland. He stated then that the measure brought in by Mr. Gladstone in 1886 was a compromise, but, I hasten to add, a compromise accepted in good faith by the Irish Party. Our position on that Motion is now precisely what it was in the years 1895, 1898, and 1899, and it was in 1898 very ably defined, as one would have anticipated, by the present Prime Minister, whose absence we all deplore, and no one more than myself, when endeavouring to deal with Irish matters with which he is so conversant. He said then, as I said this afternoon, of the Land Act of last year, that we desired to give local government to Ireland—the question then at issue—for reasons altogether outside the controversy on Home Rule. That is what I have been saying. I desire this House, when occasion offers, when time admits, when resources are available, to deal with Irish questions on their merits, and altogether outside the long and bitter controversy on Home Rule. I do not quarrel with the hon. and learned Member for holding one view as to the proper constitutional relations between the countries, and he is not entitled to quarrel with me for holding another. I hold that view, and shall continue, as far as I am able, to persist in asking this House at proper times and seasons to give its attention to Irish problems, and to see that Ireland receives her fair share of the financial resources of the Empire. But then, on the constitutional problem, the Prime Minister in 1898 went on to say—and this is pertinent to the question raised by the hon. and learned Member—that in his opinion Irish sentiment, in so far as it does desire Home Rule, would not be satisfied with a subordinate Parliament. The hon. and learned Member was moving an Amendment on the Address asking for an independent Parliament. That is my view. I do not believe that finality would attach to the concession of a subordinate Parliament to Ireland. I believe that Ireland demands, and is entitled to, political equality with Great Britain. I know that political equality can only take one of two shapes; either it must be embodied in the relations which now exist between Ireland and Great Britain—that is to say that every citizen has an equal right to vote for a Member in this House, or to sit as a Member in this House—or else it must be embodied in some such relation as that which subsists between Norway and Sweden. Those are the only two forms of political equality I know. I believe Ireland would not be finally satisfied with political inequality, even if that could be accompanied with a greater deference than is now paid to our view. I deny that we are guilty of not deferring to Ireland; I declare that we use our very best efforts to collect Irish opinion, and that when there is a general consensus of opinion in Ireland we come down to this House and ask the House to take note of the fact and to pass legislation on that basis. But when Irishmen talk of the Irish views they mean the views which they and those immediately associated with them entertain, and they frequently mean views which are not only unpalatable to other sections of Irishmen, but which are bitterly resented by other sections of Irishmen. It is not in the power of any British Parliament to legislate in order to satisfy every section of Irish opinion. I dissent from many of the propositions which the hon. and learned Member put forward. He will not mind my saying, since I include myself in that category, that politicians are not often good historians. There are a few exceptions; the late Mr. Lecky, whose death we deplore, was one, and the right hon. Member for Montrose Burghs, a politician, is a good historian. But with a few exceptions good politicians are bad historians, and also, as a rule, worse prophets. On this side of the House we sometimes say that Mr. Disraeli was a good prophet; on the other side hon. Members sometimes claim that Mr. Cobden was a good prophet. As a rule politicians are more usefully engaged in attacking the problems which are under their nose with the resources which are to their hands—and it is in that sense that I have attempted to discharge the duties which have fallen upon me in Ireland—and in attacking those immediate problems, with such resources as may be for the time available, they find again and again that the time at their disposal is limited by the claims of many other subjects, and that the attention of their audience is frequently distracted to other issues, and cannot be lured back to the theme in which a particular politician is engrossed. Political experiments cannot be carried on as if they were chemical experiments. You cannot deal with Ireland and the Irish question or problem all the time, and with nothing else. Take the two greatest experiments ever tried in Ireland—first, the experiment of Home Rule when she really had it, in Grattan's Parliament; that was a failure, an admitted failure.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: (Donegal, S). Oh, no, it was not.

MR. WYNDHAM: At any rate it could not be carried out as an isolated experiment. You had the American War and the French Revolution. Then comes the next great political experiment in Ireland, the Union. That was followed by the great contest with Napoleon, and the earlier years of the Union could not carry out all the promises of the Union or bring to Ireland all the benefits which the authors of the Union hoped she would reap. So it is now. The hon. and learned Member invites me to debate the question of Home Rule as against the Union. I am going to waive, if I may, the academic constitutional argument. We shall never agree about that. We hold that the relations of Ireland to England must be governed by the relations of these two metropolitan islands to the Empire as a whole, and that we cannot even discuss Ireland alone or Great Britain alone.

It will be more germane, I think, to the argument and the attack which the hon. and learned Member has delivered if I put forward two other arguments for the Union. One is that Ireland benefits by the Union, so far as credit is concerned at any rate. I am not going into a financial relations debate. I do not accept the application of the words which the hon. and learned Member quoted from me if he gives to them so wide an extension as I think he did. The words he quoted were—

> "The question whether Ireland gets her fair share should not be left in obscurity."

I was not talking then about the broad financial relations question. I was talking of the Equivalent Grant, and I was using that as an argument for the Development Grant as it was given last year. I adhere to that view. I think it most important that when some equivalent grant is given to Ireland it should be an open statement of fact, that it should not depend upon whether Ireland spent it that year or not, and that, even if Ireland is fairly dealt with, you will never persuade Irishmen that they are fairly dealt with, or anybody else, unless your statement of account is one which is intelligible to the persons concerned.

The other and further argument for the Union is that the difficulties of Ireland are largely due to racial and religious dissensions. If that were not the case, I think the Chief Secretary of the day and those who work with him would not be exposed to quite as much criticism as they are to-day. The hon. and learned Member's prophecy is this—that if Home Rule were granted, then all these difficulties of a financial character—all these difficulties due to deep-rooted dissension would disappear.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: A prophecy based upon history.

MR. WYNDHAM: That is his prophecy. My prophecy is that it would have been very difficult, I think impossible, for Ireland to have carried out the financial provisions of the Land Act of last year. I do not believe that Ireland, or any other country of that size, could possibly borrow £100,000,000. More than that, I know, to my cost, that it is very difficult for the combined Exchequers of the two countries to do it. It is an immense operation. The money market is in a very poor state, and it requires the earnest efforts of all those who care for the Land Act to see that the finances of the measure go through, and go through to a successful issue. I have all along felt that the financial foundation of the Land Act was the most important part of it, and that any minor defect in the edifice reared upon that foundation could be corrected in due time. During this autumn I have given my constant attention to this problem, which is a problem, I think, that can be solved. I believe that the Act can be financed, but it can only be financed at a certain pace. The hon. and learned Member said that we had neglected, I will not say flouted, all Irish advice during the passing of the measure.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I did not put it quite so strongly as that.

MR. WYNDHAM: That if we had taken their advice some of the defects in the Act would have been removed. I do not remember the hon. and learned Member or his friends moving any Amendment to what I may call the bonus clause.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: We did move an Amendment to the bonus clause, but not, perhaps, to the particular part to which the right hon. Gentleman is referring—that is, as to the tenant for life getting the bonus—because we received assurances which we thought were satisfactory.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. and learned Member, when he was dealing with this part of the subject, stated that unless the bonus were given to the tenant for life-purchase would not take place over a great part of Ireland. I think he is right, and therefore it cannot be urged that to amend that defect in the Act is a benefit conferred on the landlords. It is not so. You cannot divide the Act into benefits to the landlord and benefits to the tenants so far as purchase is concerned. Everything which facilitates purchase is a benefit alike to both classes and to the community at large. It will be my duty to amend the Act in that respect. I pass no comment whatever upon any interpretations which have been passed, or which may be passed, upon the drafting of the Act. It is for the Judges of the land to interpret Acts of Parliament as they leave this House; but the author of the Bill, the Minister responsible for the Bill, alone stands condemned if any of the language has been so ambiguous as to admit of an interpretation other than the declared intention of Parliament.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: It is very generous of you to say so.

MR. WYNDHAM: In this case the intention of Parliament was not only declared in debate; it was confirmed by division; and I am honourably bound to see that the intention of Parliament is carried out. I cannot anticipate that there will be much difficulty in doing that, because my personal honour is bound up with the matter. But I only know of one legal decision which does cast doubt on the phraseology of the Act. The hon. and learned Member—and here I come into vehement collision with him—said that the law officers had made this or that decision. The communications made by the law officers to a Minister are as privileged as any communication made by a lawyer to his client in private life. I therefore decline absolutely to say what my legal advisers have said or have not said. I am responsible for the drafting of the Act, and if in any particular it is discovered that it does not carry out the declared intentions of Parliament, why, then, in those particulars it must be amended.

But when I say I will bring in an amending Act I do not mean to say I will re-open the land question. I mean I will bring in a formal and explanatory Act making all clear which is in doubt and carrying out all the intentions that were expressed in this House and acquiesced in by all Parties. I take a more sanguine view of the Land Act than the hon. and learned Member seemed to take this afternoon. I am where he was when he spoke at Newcastle, County Down, on 26th September. I need not quote his words, but they were to the effect that in the Land Act as passed there were grounds for confidently anticipating the ultimate solution of the land question.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I think so still.

MR. WYNDHAM: And I know of nothing which has occurred to cast doubt upon that belief. I regret very much that one of the signatories to the Land Conference Report has retired from this House. From the moment that he put his name to that document no man supported more loyally, both in spirit and in letter, the compromise which was arrived at between the representatives of the landlords and the representatives of the tenants, and therefore I am sorry that he is no longer in this House in order to take part in any further debate which may, in this year or in future years, arise upon the land question.

The policy which I suggest on the land question is by administrative effort to make the best of the Act which has been passed, and not, at the first symptom of any difficulty, to throw up our hands in despair and say that we must go in for another land session. There is no ground for that of any kind or sort, either as to the quantity of sales that is going on under the Act or as to the adequacy of the Act to deal with certain special problems. The Act, after all, only came into operation on 1st November.

We had to get a house to put the Estate Commissioners in, we had to bring in a number of draft regulations——

* **MR. T. W. RUSSELL** (Tyrone, S.): And such a house!

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Member interrupts me, but I can assure him that to initiate the administration of a measure of that size is no joke, and the amount of transactions in which agreements have been arrived at is, to my mind, satisfactory from an Irish point of view. Agreements have been lodged in respect of 135 estates, embracing 3,070 holdings, and involving—that is to say, they will involve—the advance of £1,500,000. To arrive at an agreement involving £1,500,000 in three months warrants me in saying, I think, that the Land Act has fulfilled the expectations formed of it. The real difficulty is the financial difficulty, and the difficulties upon certain aspects of the land question will all settle themselves at the pace at which we can advance the financial progress of the Act. I said last year that it would not be possible to advance more than £5,000,000 a year in any one of the first three years, in the first place because the administrative labour is very great, and in the second place because it would be madness on the part of the Commissioners to attempt to raise money at a very rapid pace. Let me bring that home to hon. Members who sit for Irish constituencies. The losses due to the flotation of this loan will fall upon the Development Grant.

MR. JOHN REDMOND was understood to dissent.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. and learned Member shakes his head. We have pledged the whole credit of the country, if need be, for the advance of £100,000,000, and accompanied that with a free gift of £12,000,000 towards the solution of the land question. It would have been competent for the Government to say, "We advise that, because Irishmen attach most importance to some solution of the land question, but you cannot have that and also an equivalent grant for the money given to English primary education." Indeed, some hon. Members reproached me last year for accompanying the Land Act with the Development Grant of £185,000 a year. Naturally, speaking as the Minister for one Department, I should be glad if I had the purse of Fortunatus. But we must deal with the resources available in our hands; and I still hold that this House behaved in a liberal, as well as in a most wise, manner when it permitted me to pass that measure involving so large a loan on the credit of this country and so large a free gift in cash. And therefore the losses due to the flotation were imposed upon the Development Grant. That is a very serious matter. If the stock which is issued is issued at a considerable number of points below par, the loss upon the Development Grant to Ireland will be very heavy. I am not going to suggest any figure, but if the stock was floated at very much below par the loss would amount to many thousands of pounds, and it would be continuous. There would be a loss in the first year, and the next year there would be an additional loss, and so forth. So, if you try to borrow money in larger sums than those which I have indicated you will imperil the Irish Development Grant. I have myself felt during the autumn that instead of anticipating difficulties which have not arisen under the Land Act, as has been done in some cases, it would have been a good thing if all classes of Irishmen interested in the working of the Act had put their heads together to assist in bringing about the successful flotation of this loan. Hon. Members opposite have criticised the great Irish banks for holding so much money on deposit and paying small interest upon it, and, perhaps, investing it out of Ireland. Now there is an opportunity for the Irish banks and other persons endowed with wealth in Ireland to show that they realise how important it is to Ireland as a whole that this loan should be brought out at a satisfactory figure. I would not have mentioned that subject in this House had I not observed an undue lack of attention to that aspect of the land problem. Finance is fundamental to the successful solution of the land question in Ireland; and I believe that the Development Grant, supplying as it does a buffer State upon which this loss, if there be a loss, will fall, does enable us to go on even at a period when it is very difficult to borrow money in the City of London except at injurious rates. It behoves all who care for Ireland, and are in a position to do so, to assist in the flotation of the stock for this great national object; and it also behoves Irishmen to consider that you cannot go ahead at an extreme pace without casting an enormous burden upon the whole community in Ireland, because the Development Grant exists, not for the agricultural community alone, but for the urban community as well. It would not be fair, in my judgment, for those who belong to the agricultural community to insist on going ahead when the loss falls upon the whole nation. I do not mean to say there should be undue delay; but to wait a year, or two years, is not much to ask of those who in respect of legislation have been a favoured class. I have been addressing the House at some length, but the hon. and learned Member for Waterford opened up a wide field of controversy. The hon. and learned Gentleman explicitly asked me to state what my position was in regard to the question of University education in Ireland.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: The position of the Government.

MR. WYNDHAM: Well, Sir, my position is precisely the position occupied by the present Prime Minister in 1890.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said of course he should be interested in knowing what the personal position of the right hon. Gentleman was, but the question he asked was—What was the position of the Government?

MR. WYNDHAM: The Government do not propose to bring in any measure dealing with the University question now, and I think the Government are right. This question, though in my opinion it is an education question, is not so regarded by a great number of people in Ireland and in England and Scotland. To them it partakes also of a religious question. And the Government hold, and I hold most strongly, that you have no right to put the pressure of Party discipline and Party comradeship upon any single man in respect of a question of that character. [OPPOSITION cries of "The Education Act."] I have yet to learn that any supporter of the Government was wounded in his conscience by the Education Act. This is an educational question in my judgment. The opportunities for higher education in Ireland are very small by comparison with Great Britain, and relatively they are becoming smaller, because in this country we have long since come to the conclusion that what we mean by higher education is a teaching body, and not an examining body, and there has been a multiplication of teaching bodies in Great Britain. London University was an examining body and has become a teaching body. Victoria University is a teaching body, and Birmingham University has been founded and is also a teaching body. I speak for myself, because I want to have no misunderstanding on this matter with any of my hon. friends. I wish them to know what my opinions are. I do not think it would be right for me to disguise them, and I speak for myself, and myself alone. In the first place, the Government will not bring in a measure dealing with this question. In the second place, I hold that this is a question which ought to be settled, and I hold that opinion in common with many very distinguished statesmen who have sat on the Conservative side of the House during many years. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: A pious opinion.] Now, if that be my position, is it one which I ought not to occupy? I do not think that my position is open to any criticism from hon. Members opposite. I have never given an undertaking on behalf of the Government in connection with this question. I have never given an undertaking in public or in private. I have to all and sundry, when they have approached me on the subject, given my views in the past, and I am ready to do so in the future. My views are that Ireland needs greater opportunities for higher education, but that they cannot be obtained until there is a substantial agreement between all parties interested in Ireland. The approach towards substantial agreement in the past year has, I think, been very great and marked, and it will end, in my judgment, in all sections of feeling and belief in Ireland coming to a solution that will be satisfactory to all. I know that many do not share that view. Almost every person who speaks of the University question in England, and some who speak of it in Ireland, believe that there is a desire on the part of many people in Ireland to found a Roman Catholic University. That is not so. Then they say "That is a quibble; a college is the same thing." They believe, unless I misjudge them, that this college would be of a denominational character, with denominational tests. That is not so. Nobody proposes that there should be tests. I will not go at greater length into the matter this evening. I wish my hon. friends to understand that I am personally in favour of extending the opportunities for higher education in Ireland; but I do not think the Government ought to take the question up as a Government, and I do not believe the question can be solved, except on the basis of a general agreement in Ireland. I do believe that Irish opinion is approaching towards general agreement; and, for my part, I will never support any proposal to impose tests at this time of day.

I cannot proceed at greater length in the reply which I could give to many of the detailed criticisms which the hon. and learned Member has seen fit to pass. My duty, as I understood it, was to remove any misunderstandings. That I have done. Whether the position of the Government is acceptable to hon. Members or not I do not know. At any rate it is intelligible. In our opinion, we ought to give to Ireland fully that which they are entitled to as our political equals in the United Kingdom, and that Ireland should have an equal claim upon the time of Parliament and an equal claim upon the resources of the common Exchequer. It should be our duty to seek to make harmony possible and easy. The motto *Divide et impera* has no application to the relations between Great Britain and Ireland. We do not seek to divide Ireland in order to impose a yoke upon her. Our duty as Unionists is to remove stumbling-blocks from the path of peacemakers in Ireland, and to increase by every means in our power the growth of a spirit of reconciliation in that country. We believe that when Ireland is harmonious and strong Ireland will be contented. We believe that when Ireland is contented she will take her place at our council board and play her part throughout the Empire. I am entitled to state my view as clearly and fully as the hon. and learned Member has stated his view. That is the belief that we may still work with; that is the belief in which I have asked my hon. friends in the past to work with me, and I believe they will consider impartially any proposals which may be made from time to time for achieving these objects in Ireland. There is much more to be done in Ireland. The Irish question is not yet settled. It will not be settled in a year, in a decade, or in fifty years. You are dealing with a poor, impoverished agricultural country, which has suffered much in the past and which demands your patient labour if it is to be put in the possession of the full opportunities of national life. Much can be done in Ireland by small means—means which, I fear, the hon. and learned Member would deride. Let me give an example. I should not be justified, after the liberal manner in which this House last year acted towards Ireland, in coming again to ask this session, or next session, that a further sum from the common fund should be voted for purely Irish purposes. But even if that be not done, it is possible to effect very many objects in Ireland. I do not agree with the criticism the hon. and learned Member passed on the Irish Government, but I know it is a costly Government, and I believe that savings can be effected in that Government; and I believe that because it has been done. Last year, when this House undertook to give a free gift of £12,000,000 for purely Irish purposes, I stated that it would be possible to institute savings which in five years would amount to £250,000. All the steps have been taken to produce that result, and it will be produced. It will go on accumulating, and in ten or twelve years that saving will amount to £270,000 a year; and more can be effected. It is right and proper that such additional savings, and other savings of a similar character on the cost of Irish Governments should be used to meet the peculiar needs of an impoverished agricultural country, and that they should be looked upon, as the Irish Church surplus fund was looked upon, as Irish money which, within bounds, should be applied to purely Irish purposes. There is nothing novel in that allocation of Irish money to Irish purposes.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.,): Then where does the free gift come in if it is made up by savings?

MR. WYNDHAM: I am sure the hon. Member does not wish to repudiate the bargain come to between the two sides of the House last year. Last year we agreed to give £12,000,000, and I promised the House that there would be a saving of £250,000. That, I hold, should be devoted to Irish purposes.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I do not repudiate anything.

MR. WYNDHAM: I understand the hon. Member does not wish to repudiate the agreement arrived at last year.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: My point is that the right hon. Gentleman says there is a free gift of £12,000,000, whereas this gift is to be made up by savings effected in the administration. I therefore say that it cannot be called a free gift.

MR. WYNDHAM: The hon. Gentleman does not repudiate what I stated. It is a distinction as to phraseology. I am not pretending that in this matter we have been thriftless or generous in any lax sense of the term. On the contrary, I say that we have used our best efforts to deal fairly and justly with Ireland in the matter of financial relations and arrangements, and I hold we shall continue to do so, but I would point out that that cannot be done when it would be improper for me to come to this House and ask for further sums of money. I cannot suppose that the reply which I have made will be satisfactory to the hon. and learned Member. He is the head of an independent Party, and is free to act without any concern for the political welfare of the present Government, and the present Government is quite free to act in what it considers the best manner for the benefit of Ireland, of the United Kingdom, and the Empire as a whole. For my part, I shall ask my hon. friends to continue to tread the path which has been followed by our leader, the present Prime Minister, who, while at all times maintaining his and our views of the proper constitution of the two countries, has been ready, according to our lights, and within the limits which we think necessary for the safety of the Empire, as I think we always shall be, to assist the development of a full national life in Ireland along every path of industrial, intellectual, and artistic progress.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) said one did not know which to admire most—the literary charm of the right hon. Gentleman's speech or the skilful manner in which he evaded the real point of the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford. The right hon. Gentleman began his speech by discussing the question of an independent Parliament and other topics which did come into the speech of the hon. and learned Member, whose views they all knew on the point. The hon. and learned Member's point was that certain pledges had been given by the Prime Minister and others which had not been carried out. It was all very well to talk of an independent Parliament, but, while he did not agree with that proposition, that did not prevent him saying that the remarks made about education and other things in connection with the administration of Ireland was a most damaging attack on the position of the right hon. Gentleman. What was the right hon. Gentleman's position? He went on the Unionist principle that the government of Ireland should be in accordance with Irish ideas. He had a good deal of sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman himself. The University question was not the only one in which the right hon. Gentleman's position was differentiated from that of some of his colleagues. The right hon. Gentleman was adding another to the long list of conspicuous witnesses to the failure of that policy. The hon. and learned Member, in regard to University education, referred to promises made long ago, which promises remained unfulfilled. The right hon. Gentleman, when pressed on this point, stated his own opinion; but they could not forget that that was the stock answer they received from Ministers. He could not forget that the Prime Minister, at Manchester in 1899, declared practically that, unless this question of University education was settled, Unionism was a failure. Years had passed, and now they had the stock answer—that the Government could not carry out what some of its members thought was an act of justice to Ireland. He could not forget, further, that in 1899 there was a proposal from the Opposition side of the House that the question should be made a non-Party one, but the Government neglected to take any steps. He did not believe, if the Government declared what their policy was, and showed that it was not a policy in the interests of any particular religion, they would find that opposition which they anticipated. But they had never put forward any scheme. They had never taken their life in their hand and invited the opinion of the House on any scheme. How could they suppose that any progress was likely to be made until they took up the whole question in a way in which it could be dealt with.

The right hon. Gentleman spoke of an advance in this matter. He did not agree with him. In 1898 exactly this point of advance had been reached. There was a scheme at that time which amounted very much to what Lord Dunraven was now proposing, only, he thought, it was in the even better form of a scheme for two Universities. That scheme had been greatly canvassed in Ireland, and he had the best reason for knowing that there was substantial agreement on it. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman how that scheme had been facilitated. In the summer of 1897 the Irish Bishops met at Maynooth and passed four resolutions. The first of these was that they would accept an open University. In these resolutions the Irish Bishops accepted the principle of an open University, of a majority of laymen being on the governing body of the institution, and a provision that no state funds should go to the promotion if religious educa tion, or anything leading up to it. The matter went further, of he mistook not. They were willing to trust the Government to deal fairly with the governing body, and put proper representatives of education on it. They offered no objection to a scheme of two open Universities—one in Dublin, and the other in Belfast—one in which there should be, in point of fact, something of a Catholic atmosphere, and the other in which the atmosphere should be Presbyterian. That scheme was much discussed in Ireland; it was before the people there; it was known here, and there was every disposition to treat it as a a non-Party question. Notwithstanding that, however, no progress had been made with the question from that time to this. He was not blaming the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman was again only another witness in that long train of people who had succeeded to a post of the highest responsibility, and who, moving in the direction of trying to devise some means of governing the people of Ireland according to their own notions, found themselves hampered in their efforts to do so. The right hon. Gentleman said that he was strongly in favour of reform of the higher education in Ireland. That might be. Every Chief Secretary and every responsible Minister in Ireland had felt it was the greatest scandal that that country had not that development of higher education in a fashion suited to the genius of her people.

To-day they had a condition of things in which there were two Universities—one a University admirable in its type, and with splendid historical traditions associated with it. But the University of Dublin, which catered for a class, could not do what was necessary for the whole Irish people. It could not do it in the fashion which the popular Scottish Universities did for the population of Scotland, or in the way some of the new Universities in England were doing for the middle and the lower middle classes of England. Then there was the Royal Irish University; but that was an examining body and nothing more; it had no connection with any college. Ireland was far behind both Scotland and England, and yet he ventured to say that it needed University education possibly more than either of these two countries. He remembered talking with a distinguished Irishman, a Unionist, holding a high position, who said that, for conscience sake, clever young men in Ireland, sons of middle-class parents, who would in the ordinary course go to a University, refrained from going where their creed forbade them. The result was that their sphere of ambition was narrowed, they were shut out from the higher professions, and had to go into journalism or some such career. He knew nothing more deplorable than the way in which the easy passage from class to class, and the association of people of different opinions in a common basis of culture, which the University gave, was denied the youth of Ireland, and that healing influence taken away from them. He knew it was said on both sides of the House that they did not want any University teaching which was dominated by denominationalism, or by a particular Church. Supposing that to be so, they were leaving three-fourths of the people of Ireland uneducated. Why not concede religious liberty to the people of Ireland? Why make them feel that they must make this sacrifice, or be disloyal to their creed? If the Government chose to be in earnest on this matter, they could deal with this question without violating a single canon laid down by the strongest of their supporters. The hierarchy would not oppose an open University; at any rate they were prepared to acquiesce in it; the Presbyterians of Belfast were ready to acquiesce in it likewise, and it seemed to him a grave responsibility that the Government should come once again with the oft-repeated tale, to which they had listened so frequently in the past, that they could not, as a Government, bring in a measure to deal with this question. Surely it was open to them, holding the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman, to let the House of Commons decide on this question by a majority. Let the time be given for the House to express its views freely and fully, and let no Party considerations stand in the way of that expression of opinion. Surely the time had come for the Government to take the course shadowed forth in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. If they did not, this question was doomed to sterility. He did not wonder at the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, or at his attitude of disgust with the Government. He did not wonder at the hon. and learned Member insisting on the introduction of a Bill. He believed if the Government would find the time, make this question an open one, accept loyally the decision of the House of Commons and bring in legislation to give effect to it, the hon. and learned Member for Waterford would probably be prepared to abate somewhat his hard conditions and assist in carrying it through.

All those things made it extremely difficult to take a progressive course in regard to Ireland. In the last few years there had been a change in the situation of that country. They had witnessed an uprising of a new element in the political situation. What with the deliberations which had taken place in regard to the Irish land question, and now on the education question, the situation in Ireland seemed to him to have very materially altered on all hands. The prejudices of people about Irish self-government, and about the devolution of large powers to the people of Ireland for managing their own affairs were vanishing away. He should like to see that continued and advanced by dealing on some non-Party basis with this question of education. He believed it could be done. What was required was to establish a relation of confidence between the responsible leaders in Ireland, and the responsible leaders over here, and that might be done by consultation. He rejoiced to think that there were other signs of that better state of things, but he was disappointed when an opportunity came in which these hopes might be to some extent realised, that the Government should fall back into the old hopeless position. He sympathised with the right hon. Gentleman, who was wider-minded than some of his colleagues; but he could not think it was worthy of him to allow this opportunity to slip through his fingers. Better to risk the life of the Government than to leave this question in its present position. It was not by trying to save their life in this case that they could save it. It was by taking risks that they could do more for those whom they represented and for the cause of Irish education. He knew of no course which would be more calculated to rouse that enthusiasm which he feared was waning in the supporters of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, than that he should frankly come forward with a great scheme like that which Lord Dunraven had foreshadowed of two colleges in one University, or two open Universities for Ireland, —which he believed would be the best— and commend it to the judgment of the House of Commons, leaving it to the House to deal with it. If that were done he was convinced that the House would assert its true instincts, would recognise the justice of the case of Ireland, and would, by a large majority, pronounce for the settlement of this question, which would redeem them from what he called more than a scandal.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, N.) said that the right hon. Gentleman limited his observations almost entirely to one very striking and most cogent and important illustration, but still only one of the many illustrations given by the hon. Member for Waterford as a justification to the continuous demand of the Irish people for self-government. After the declaration of the Chief Secretary, he differed a little from the views of the right hon. Gentleman as to the good effects which had been produced by the system of Parliamentary manipulation such as he had proposed, in reference to the University question. There was a time when there was a very encouraging debate on non-Party lines on that question, as far as men of light and leading in this House were concerned, but it did not appear to him that, even on that auspicious occasion, those in whose hands the right hon. Gentleman had formally placed the settlement of this question, were in the slightest degree influenced by the arguments, assertions, and views put forward by the leading minds in this House. The right hon. Gentleman said that no advance had been made, but if no advance had been made, it was acknowledged that reasonable and satisfactory views had been assented to on the part of the hierarchy. The Chief Secretary had not denied the statement that no proposal had been made by any responsible Minister, even to the Cabinet of the open mind, to consider the settlement of the Irish University question. That was a statement of a colleague of the right hon. Gentlemen and was quoted and not denied. It was inaction on the part of the right hon. Gentleman not to have made such a proposal, because no one was better qualified to judge the strength of opinion in the quarter to which he had referred the ultimate arbitrament and decision of the question. The Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman were throughout responsible. The great majority of the Irish people were acquiescent. That, therefore, was not the quarter to which the question was referred. It was the Londonderry quarter, whose gracious views on liberty, on the extinguishment of religious prejudice, and on the effacement of old notions of religious ascendancy were to prevail.

The right hon. Gentleman referred to the high principles which ought to obtain in the settlement of a question of a religious nature, because he said this question partly partakes of a religious nature; all Party discipline, all ties of comradeship were to be set on one side. The Irish Members, however, now understood the situation; they understood that the hopes, which had not been for the first time excited by negotiations, went a considerable length towards ideas of good feeling and benevolence, and it was hoped would produce corresponding feelings on the part of those to whom they were addressed; the result was that the Irish people were again fooled; they had learned once again the lesson which he thought had been adequately taught by the action of the Prime Minister himself, that after all it was a very doubtful advantage, in the present system of political Parliamentary and Party government, to suggest the existence of open questions and non-Party views on matters of that kind. The Prime Minister, he had no doubt, used all the influence he could. He spoke in this House openly and fully his individual opinion. There was hardly anything he could not do with his followers, but he could not settle the Irish University question. He felt he could not, he found he could not, and he acknowledged he could not. Were they therefore any further forward because the most powerful political personage in the country had expressed his view in favour of the settlement of this question? Were they any better off because the Chief Secretary, speaking for himself alone, had expressed his sympathy while acknowledging his impotence? Could anyone doubt that within one year this question would be settled if the Irish people had the power of settling it? The right hon. Gentleman had made ample confession of the wrong which was being done to the country, but if he refused the Irish people the power of settling their own affairs, he was responsible for the wrong done by this question remaining unsettled because of a prejudice on the part of the people of this country, or the still keener prejudice of the allies of the right hon. Gentleman in Ireland.

The right hon. Gentleman spoke of equal political rights and of equal claims on the time of Parliament. He himself was Irish and had equal claims to justice. Had the situation which now existed in Ireland ever happened in England, at any rate in modern times? General election after general election, notwithstanding alternations of hope and fear, and notwithstanding the difficulties which accumulate around a Party which went on under disappointment and trouble and failure, notwithstanding the allurements of honourable office and emoluments which after all did much towards the devotion of a political Party in this country, the Irish people returned by four to one representatives of one set of political views and aims. Was it conceivable that a question which the Prime Minister acknowledged was a matter of justice, which the Minister mainly responsible for the Government of Ireland regarded as one of justice and capable of settlement, should remain unsettled, although four to one of the population and four to one of the representatives of the country had been calling and calling and calling in vain for a settlement? Is it not a matter for wonder that Ireland, which, centuries and centuries ago, spread the light of learning throughout Europe, and which was now, under very difficult circumstances, still devoted to learning, should be deprived of the benefits of University education? He pointed with pride and satisfaction, as a testimony to the natural capacity of the Irish nation, to the fact that notwithstanding the obstructions which were placed in their way the Irish Members were not afraid or ashamed to enter into conflict in the high field of Parliament and to hold their own in debate against the minority representations from their own country, which was possessed of fortune, had enjoyed University education and was fostered and nurtured in Parliamentary and political ambitions by gifts of honour and place which had been given to an extent not given to any other twenty-one Members of any section of Parliament. The national representation could not only hold their own against that section but also against the rest of the House. He could not understand how any political assembly anxious for the advancement and welfare of all parts of the Kingdom could hesitate about this matter. He could not understand, if the House of Commons believed in the advantages of highly trained intellects, why it should not settle this question. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to a University on the Scottish form; all they wanted in Ireland was a University with the means of doing the work of a University, with a satisfactory endowment and one not to be used as the funds of Trinity College and some of the older Universities were now being used. They wanted money and that was the reason why it was no use in talking about open questions and proposals not made directly by the Government of the day.

The University question was the most cogent evidence of the failure of the Government to do what was best for Ireland. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had opened the question from the most fundamental point of view. He had opened it as a question of right and justice for the sentiment of the country, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary acknowledged that he knew that the hon. and learned Gentlemen had brought forward the question nearest his heart. Yes, but not nearest his heart alone; nearest the hearts of all his colleagues who surrounded him, and the hearts of all those who lived in the country from which the Irish Members came—some of them twenty or thirty years ago — to call for a solution of this problem, nearest to the hearts of those far more numerous and wealthy scions of the Irish race who had been driven, mainly in consequence of the action of the Government, from Irish soil; nearest to the hearts of those millions of Irish who lived in this island, and who told the Government recently what their opinion was; nearest to the hearts of the many abroad in countries which owed allegiance to this Empire, where they had equal political rights, and where they were able to participate in and take their fair share of the control of the destinies of the country which they called their own; yet nearest to their hearts they felt as the sons of Ireland did; nearest to their hearts remained the Irish question, a sentiment not unreasonable and not to be condemned by right feeling men as hostile. In those who had been forced to leave the land of their birth and their homes and who had by a natural process, obtained their political freedom, sentiments of hostility had been largely mitigated, but there remained always a feeling for Irish freedom. That feeling existed in the mighty English-speaking Republic in respect to which it was the greatest desire of this country to obtain permanent political relations of good will and friendship, based on community of tongue and association and community of aspirations in respect to the affairs of the world. The Irish of that country were, and would continue to be, a barrier in the way of this country obtaining its wish until justice was done to Ireland. He had known nothing more remarkable than the effect for good, among the Irish of the United States, of the proposals of Mr. Gladstone for Home Rule.

The right hon. Gentleman had said this question could not be treated as an isolated question, that they could not deal with questions relating to Ireland, Scotland and England separately. The right hon. gentleman called them two metropolitan islands! Two! Let not the right hon. Gentleman mock the Irish Members by calling Ireland a metropolitan island. There was only one metropolis, and that ruled Ireland as well as itself. He accepted the suggestion that in this great question of policy they were entitled to look at the whole situation, and were fully entitled to consider in a question of policy relating to the Empire its relations to the rest of the world. If they wanted to strengthen the Empire as a whole in the face of the world, it was by contentment to Ireland given by the means which had been proved by the Government to give contentment to different places under more difficult conditions that the Empire should be strengthened. The great weakness of this country was its treatment of Ireland, and yet they were told that the weakness must continue for ever. The difficulties spoken of by the right hon. Gentleman with regard to an Irish University were not limited to sentiment about the University. He had spoken of racial and religious questions. As to the racial question, enough had been said. What was the English race? How many strains of blood went to make this composite nation? As to the religious question, in which, however, little Christianity and less charity was to be found, that difficulty had been tersely expressed by the phrase that Home Rule meant Rome Rule. How did it come about first of all that the priest should occupy such a high place with reference to the views of the people of Ireland? That question had already been answered. The educated part of the community, the landlords, had disassociated themselves from the people long ago. The mass of the people, from whom might have been drawn picked men who, with a University education, would have been able to cope with the educated class, had been left uneducated and kept down, they had naturally and reasonably turned towards the Irish priests, and it was only natural that the priests should assume a position of greater prominence in the affairs of their flock than otherwise might have been the case. But what was it that brought forward the Irish priest in political conflicts and made him feel that it was his duty to take that position? It was that this country had all the religious and natural instincts of the people against it. This country had established a union of politics and religion, and had rendered it not only natural and possible but probable that the priest should take an active part in leading those who had been left with no other leaders in the sense of educated men.

The granting of Home Rule would dissolve the relation between the religious faith of one section of the community, and the political condition of the community altogether. Once the dominant pressure of this great national question was ended, there would arise in Ireland the natural and healthful play of difference amongst parties. They would not be parties, Protestant and Catholic; the local questions which came up would be questions into which the religious element would not enter. The parish priest would remain a citizen, influential by reason of his character and the confidence reposed in him, but he would no longer lead the people as one man. His flock would necessarily be divided, and it would be his duty to act according to a wholly altered state of things; the difference of opinion would render it prudent and proper that he should no longer take the prominent part in Irish politics of which complaint was often made. So far for Home Rule, meaning Rome Rule, in the sense of entailing the undue and unhealthy predominance of the priest, it was the one thing which, by a necessary process, would effect the change desired. How could the English people expect the Irish nation to rest contented with the condition in which Irish questions at present stood? How could they expect anything but discontent when Irish representatives in Parliament, in the proportion of four to one, were powerless to obtain relief, and when Irish questions were settled according to the views of the minority of Irish Members, many of whom were always placemen, and almost all expectant placemen? Let Englishmen put themselves in the place of Irishmen. How would they feel if England were as much smaller as she is larger than Ireland, and if her representatives, in the proportion of four to one, were powerless in the common Parliament, and her destinies systematically arranged by the minority? Irishmen would be less than men if they did not insist upon their right to Home Rule. Of course there were questions of difficulty. There was no question at all that any constitutional reform not accomplished by force was a reform granted by Parliament, that any Parliament obtained by Ireland must be a statutory Parliament, and that what Parliament had done Parliament had power to undo. Those propositions naturally and inevitably followed, and they were frankly acknowledged by all Irishmen. What they said was that they would have no mere formal freedom in the Parliament of Ireland, but substantial freedom to govern Ireland according to her own will. He knew how a subordinate Parliament granted by the British Parliament worked; he was aware of the degree of freedom and self-government which existed, although its acts might be disallowed and its charter annulled. Those were great reserve powers with which Irishmen did not propose to quarrel, which were to be used only for the purpose for which they were reserved, and which would leave to the Irish people that reality of self-government which, being a sensible people, was all they cared for.

They had not abated their demands; but would always choose their own time and method for bringing them forward. The Chief Secretary would be wise to wait a little before attempting to teach the Irish Party politics. They had their views as to when a Home Rule Motion should be put forward. There was no sort of wisdom in proposing every session such a Motion as a mere matter of course; it was for them to decide when and how they would challenge the opinion of the House, and probably they understood the game quite as well as the right hon. Gentleman. It was a very abnormal state of things which put the Irish Party and the Irish people at large, in such a relation to the Government of the day that they were about the last to learn what was going on in the concerns of the country. There were whispers in corridors, an occasional letter in the paper—a *balon d'essai*—signed by a noble Lord, suggestions here and suggestions there, but there was none of the sympathy between governors and governed which ought to exist—except so far as concerned the minority who supported the Administration, who knew everything, and who dictated to the masses of the people, while the representatives of those masses were left to such methods as he had described for understanding the condition of affairs. The Irish people did not conceive the Grattan Parliament to be the failure which had been alleged. If the House considered the then condition of politics, the situation in which the rights of Roman Catholics and popular rights then were, what Grattan's Parliament did, and the progress it made, it would be admitted that Grattan's Parliament needed no defence against the attacks of the right hon. Gentleman. He agreed, however, that Grattan's Parliament was a very different thing from what would now be regarded as an ideal Parliament. As to the contention that Ireland received benefits from the Union, he believed that if she, being a poor country, were governed on a scale having regard to her poverty, if she were not drawn at the heels of the British Parliament, and governed on a scale having reference to so-called Imperial objects—of which many were disastrous failures and others doubtful experiments—her difficulties would not be as great as they at present were. Sweetness of feeling and tone would be compensation for any loss of money by England which was largely drawn out of Ireland, and even when sent over to Ireland very largely expended, not according to the need of the Irish people, but expended extravagantly and for purposes that had not received the assent of the people.

He did not propose at all to enter upon the subject of the Land Act. The proper time for that would be when the amending Bill was introduced. The Chief Secretary had told them that his Bill was going to be limited to the correction of somebody's blunders in draftsmanship, and that he would see that what Parliament intended should be carried out in the Act. He did not propose to open the door for further discussion. They would of course take their own course. Giving the right hon. Gentleman credit for good intentions in connection with the Act of last year, with all his political sagacity illumined by the intimate knowledge of the circumstances and conditions of Irish life by the Irish Members, notwithstanding the happy feeling that prevailed last session, and notwithstanding the utmost desire upon the Irish Benches to minimise causes of difference, yet they were compelled to bring forward many topics; the right hon. Gentleman laboured long and hard to meet their views, but notwithstanding the utmost desire to avoid subjects of contention, and a desire on their part to meet the right hon. Gentleman as far as they could, they were yet compelled last year to speak strongly against, and as far as they could prevent, the passage of certain parts of the Land Bill; this left them now not merely perfectly free but absolutely bound, after experience had demonstrated that these defects which they predicted had already arisen, to take the opportunity of stating them to this House, not merely vindicating their judgment—which was a poor matter—but endeavouring to obtain redress of those things which obstructed the Act. The Irish Members were bound to endeavour to cure the defects in the Act which, if they were allowed to remain, would make the operations of the Act slower, and would prevent its beneficial operation for the people of Ireland, and its safe operation for the people of this country. He rejoiced that they had raised at the opening of the session this inexorable attitude—an attitude which they were sent there to take, and as to which they would be false to their constituencies if they shrunk from maintaining—on the great national question which to their mind embodied and overwhelmed all other questions. All other questions were susceptible of being solved, if Home Rule be granted, by those whose interest it should be to solve them. This solution of the Home Rule question was the one that would relieve them of these questions. There was no alternative to the freedom of Home Rule which they demanded for Ireland.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, E. Toxteth) said that all the enthusiasm on the Unionist side of the House was so much concentrated in another quarter, namely, in the corner occupied by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, that there was scarcely any enthusiasm for the Government itself. It never occurred to him that the hon. Member for Haddingtonshire would prescribe as a tonic for the Government an Irish Roman Catholic University Bill. That might improve the position of the Government in Ireland, but in various parts of England it would be received with the greatest disfavour, and so far from improving their position and avoiding a catastrophe, he could not conceive anything more likely to precipitate divisions in a Party, already divided, than what had been suggested across the floor of the House by the right hon. and learned Member for Haddingtonshire. The question of Home Rule which at the moment occupied their minds was one which possibly to-day needed no definition, nor was it necessary for hon. Members on the Government side of the House to define their position, which remained as it was when the question was first raised. Perhaps in the present state of Parties and the present divided state of public opinion it might be desirable to re-affirm from all sides of the Unionist Party their determination to adhere to the Union as one of the main factors o Unionist policy. He readily understood the reasons which led the Chief Secretary to define, as he had done with admirable lucidity, his own position on the question. Even the hon. and learned Member for Waterford admitted that if every Irish grievance was removed the demand for Home Rule would still remain in all its pristine vigour. This was not a very encouraging prospect for English politicians who believed that by gradually removing Irish grievances they were removing arguments for Home Rule. As he understood the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, if every Irish grievance and injustice were swept away to-morrow the demand of the Irish people for Home Rule would remain and they would still be confronted with this claim for independence. He thought on the Government side of the House they ought to re-affirm their determination, not from motives of bigotry or racial prejudice, but from the point of view of practical politics, that they would not go back one single inch upon the Union or the position they had taken up in regard to it.

On this question of a Roman Catholic University for Ireland he would like to say a word or two. He had listened carefully to the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and he must confess that he could not quite make out what was his position on this question. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the Government did not propose to bring in any measure dealing with University education in Ireland this session. But there was something in the words and also in the manner of the right hon. Gentleman which gave him the impression that if action were taken by a private Member on this subject that action would receive the benevolent neutrality, and possibly the benevolent interest, of His Majesty's Government. That seemed to him something of the same attitude that the Government had adopted on another question. The Government thought that on the fiscal question the country was not yet ripe for food taxation, and, therefore, while public opinion was gradually maturing, the Cabinet assumed the attitude of not initiating a policy. They left it to a private individual—certainly not an ordinary private individual, but one who stood high in the estimation of his countrymen—to educate the country to the point of legislation. In the same way it appeared to him that the Government were going to wait until the House was educated up to the point of sanctioning a scheme for a Roman Catholic University in Ireland. They were not going boldly to take the responsibility of initiating such legislation, but they were going to wait and affect a benevolent interest to the missionary efforts of private individuals.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Send Jesse Collings out.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR was bound to say that suggestion never occurred to him. It might commend itself to the hon. Member.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: It would be in keeping with the rest of their actions.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR said he was very much surprised to hear from the hon. and learned Member for Waterford that the Conservative Party was pledged to this policy. He did not think that the Conservative Party was pledged to the policy of a Roman Catholic University for Ireland. He turned up a speech of the present Prime Minister delivered in 1900 when this question was last debated in the House. The right hon. Gentleman used some remarkable words on that occasion to the effect that this was an agreed upon open question between both Front Benches, and therefore he could not assume responsibility in the matter except for himself. If the Prime Minister three years ago could only treat this matter as an agreed upon open question between the two Front Benches certainly it was clear that he could not pledge his Party, and he could not see that those who had entered this House since the date when the right hon. Gentleman spoke, were in any way pledged to such a policy. For his part he should like to say definitely and distinctly that if the Prime Minister had pledged, as was assumed, the Conservative Party to any policy of establishing a Roman Catholic University for Ireland he emphatically repudiated any such pledge so far as he was concerned.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: The thing is done.

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR said he was free from responsibility in the matter, and he was perfectly entitled to make his position clear to the House. The previous speaker spoke of the proposed University for Ireland in a way which placed the proposal in a new light to him. If he understood the hon. Member rightly he spoke of it as a means of emancipating the people of Ireland from the leadership and guidance of the priests. He must confess that shed quite a flood of light on the proposal. It had been to him one of the standing mysteries of the Irish people that, while they were so determined to assert their freedom and their civil rights, they were so emphatic in maintaining and sheltering clerical authority in religious matters. It did seem to him a curious proposal that they should endeavour to relieve the masses of the people in Ireland from undue dependence on priestly influence by suggesting the setting up and endowment of what, so far as he knew at present, could be nothing else but a close religious corporation for the guidance of the great masses of the people. He said that, of course, subject to the details of any scheme that might be put before them, but, pending its production by a private individual or the Government, he desired not to discuss this matter further. He felt bound to say that whether the Motion came before the House from a private individual or from the Government, those who in this House had fought for the principle of liberty in this country and in opposition to religious monopoly in all its forms were justified in scrutinising most closely any proposal to set up similar institutions even in a country where, he admitted, they were much more consonant with the spirit of the people. It was in that spirit that any such proposal would be jealously and carefully scrutinised by a very large body of Members on that side of the House, not merely by that small minority from Ireland to which allusion had been made, but by those who represented many English constituencies whose feelings on this matter were strongly and deeply moved.

*Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said there were two matters in the speech of the Chief Secretary to which he wished to refer. The right hon. Gentleman opened by defending the Board of Works, and he had defended, as he had a perfect right to do, the appointment of his private secretary to the office of Commissioner of Works. Mr. Hanson was a very able man. No one who knew his work during the passing of the Land Bill would deny it, but he wished to point out that this Board had for a long time been the dumping ground of private secretaries. He said advisedly that the monuments of incapacity of that Board were strewn all over the country. There was no Board that had done worse work in Ireland, and that was saying a great deal. He did not care whether a man was English, Scotch, or Irish if the work was properly done, but anyone who cared to compare the Local Government administration in England with that of Ireland would find a very great difference, and that not in favour of Ireland.

The next question he wished to refer to was that of the Land Act. He should have been glad to leave this to the occasion when the Amendment on the subject was proposed, but the Chief Secretary went at great length into the subject and that led him to infer the probability that the Amendment would never be reached. He took it that the Chief Secretary had put his case on the Land Act before the House, and for all practical purposes the debate was at an end. [Cries of "No!"] That was his opinion, and he proposed to say what he had to say upon it now that he had the chance. Nobody had declared the Land Act to be a failure. Nobody could say anything of the kind. Before the Chief Secretary spoke tonight it was well known that more than £1,000,000 worth of Irish land had been sold, and agreements and arrangements were being made for at least £2,000,000 worth more. While he did not know any responsible person who had declared the Land Act to be a failure there were things that required to be said about it. He would not deal with Mr. Justice Ross's judgment here. It was a landlords' question in one sense. But if the landlord did not get the bonus there would be more to pay for the land. He did not complain of the decision. Lawyers in Ireland were agreed that the decision was justified by the wording of the Act, but they all agreed that a decision the other way would have been equally justified. Mr. Justice Ross had knocked the Land Act over for the present, and it did not surprise anybody who had followed the history of Land Acts in the past. There was a much more serious matter, and he trusted the Chief Secretary, if he was going to deal with the question, would see to it. What was one of the great objects of the Land Act? One of the great objects was to affect what was called the Western problem. He very much doubted if the Chief Secretary, with all his powers and all his eloquence, could have got the Bill through the House if it had not been that the House felt something was at last going to be done in earnest for the Western people. What did it come to? The Land Act was in a precarious position. If the landlords in the West of Ireland were able to sell their patches of land—those uneconomic holdings of four and five acres in extent—at a high price and retain the grazing lands because the bonus could not be paid on untenanted land—and that was the opinion prevailing—the position was one of the gravest danger. The main purpose of the Act would be frustrated if these men were allowed to sell their patches of land, which were no security for the British taxpayer, and to retain their grazing lands. The problem of the land in the West of Ireland was unsettled now.

There was another matter to which he wished to refer—the condition of the Act as regarded Ulster. Now, he had been of one opinion all through this controversy in regard to the Ulster landlords. When he seconded the Motion of the hon. Member for Waterford in February, 1900, he stated that the basis of the Ulster position for compulsion was the belief universally felt in Ulster that the landlords there would not sell. They got their rents regularly; they were paid as regularly as the interest on Consols; they brought more than Consols or any other gilt-edged security, and why should they sell? At the Land Conference they had the assurance that if the demand for compulsion was given up the landlords would be willing to sell, provided they secured their second term net income. Compulsion was therefore waived. And what happened in Ulster? He spoke from actual knowledge, because careful records had been kept, and reports were received from every estate, where the landlords had offered to sell or where the tenants were willing to purchase. Twenty-two of the largest landlords had refused to sell on any terms, headed by the Marquess of Downshire—a landlord with some 4,000 or 5,000 tenants. And mark, Lord Downshire was not a landlord with an evil character, but a landlord the history of whose estate stretched back into last century as owned by the best landlord Ulster ever had. Let the House consider the position of these tenants. They were not men who refused to pay their rents. They were not men who had caused disorder and the necessity for the police. ["Hear, hear" from the IRISH Benches.] Precisely, he had been told that if they had they would have been better off. That was what his friends opposite told him. He maintained that these men had been admirable citizens of this country, and loyal in every sense of the word. And now they were forced to look on whilst men in the South and West of Ireland, who had avowedly given trouble, were getting their land by State aid, and would be occupying owners with enormous State advantages, while they were grinding out judicial rents to the landlords who would not comply with the wish of Parliament that the partnership should end. There was a second class of landlords who came forward with the plea :—"I do not want to sell my land; my family has been here for generations, for centuries. The relations between the tenants and myself have been of the best character. I do not want to sell, but in order to comply with the evident wish of Parliament I will do so upon terms." And then, curiously alive to the wish of Parliament, they put their land up roughly at twenty-seven and a quarter years purchase of the rent with the bonus added! Now, under the Ashbourne Acts and the Act of 1891 the average price of land in Ulster was eighteen years purchase, and these gentlemen would sell to their tenants at thirty years purchase, including the bonus. That was the second class of landlords they had to face in Ulster. What had been done? Two considerable estates had been sold. One was the estate of Mr. Archdale in North Fermanagh, who was for the tenants all through. His agent proposed terms which were unacceptable to the tenants, but when Mr. Archdale heard of it he stepped in and sold at reasonable terms. The other estate which had been sold was that of Mr. Close in County Armagh. There were a handful of small properties with fifteen or twenty tenants which had also been sold. There could be no doubt that only a very few sales had taken place, and what was worse than that, the negotiations had, to a large extent, been broken off. Take his own constituency. What had been the usual reception the tenants had got? The largest owner in South Tyrone sent a letter to his tenants. He stated that he bought his land at a high price. If they were willing to pay a certain sum for it they could have it, if not he had nothing more to say to them. There were 600 tenants on that estate, and they were very likely to vote strongly Unionist at the next election. What was likely to happen if this went on in Ulster was that the Ulster Members would be found sitting on the Opposition side, and not on the Ministerial Benches.

MR. STOCK (Liverpool, Walton): You will be there!

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Oh no, I wont be there (on the Opposition Benches). You are going over. I am going to stay where I am; I am going to stay where I am whatever happens. I have got a firm grip of my holding and I mean to keep it. What he wanted to point out was this: One of these landlords replied the other day to a perfectly respectful request from the tenantry on the estate, saying—

> "So and so in one part of the country has got so much, so and so in another part has got so much. This part is more peaceable than either, and I ought to get more."

Did that require any comment? A circular was put into his hand to-day issued by one of the largest land agents in Ireland and printed just as an Act of Parliament was printed—on the same kind of paper. Now what did that circular which was issued on four estates in Ulster say? It gave some elaborate calculations, which of course the farmers would not pay attention to because they had got their own idea about the arithmetic of the question, but the land agent went on, and in italics pointed out that Mr. Chamberlain's scheme was coming on—[NATIONALIST cries of "Oh"]—that it would raise the price of agricultural produce, that they would be better off and would be able to pay him more. The whole thing was an elaborate conspiracy to boom the price of land, to get too much out of the tenants, and put a great burden upon their shoulders first and ultimately on the shoulders of the British taxpayers. He confessed he did not see what the right hon. Gentleman was to do with the present situation in Ulster. All he could say was that it was a very grave and dangerous situation. These men, let him tell the Chief Secretary, were not easily roused, but when they were roused they knew what to do—and in Irish history they had done it before. The Ulster tenants who had fought for the Union, who had paid their rent, who had performed all the duties of citizenship, would not allow an Act of Parliament to be so perverted by men who cared nothing for the peace of the country but only for their own pockets. They would not allow an Act of Parliament to be so perverted that it would bring advantages and blessings to the men of the South and West which would be denied to their comrades in the North of Ireland. That was the position in Ulster and a General Election would prove it. He did not see that the Chief Secretary could intervene in a matter like that at present. It would have to be done by Parliament—he supposed very much as the education question was settled—by independent Members bringing in Resolutions on Bills. That was the way the Government was acting. All sense of responsibility was done away with. But there was one remedy which was clear and these Ulster tenants had made up their minds. What was the principle underlying the Land Act of 1881? The principle was so far as rent was concerned that where the landlord and the tenant failed to agree as to the rent that rent was fixed by a Parliamentary tribunal. The Land Court decided what the rent was to be. To apply that principle was not an outrage against any law. If the landlord selling and the tenant buying could not agree, then let the Estate Commissioners fix the price subject to the condition the landlords accepted at the Land Conference, that they should be secured their second-term net income. That would be a perfectly straight proposal. Your Ulster landlord cared nothing for the peace of the country. The whole battle of the Union with the Ulster landlord had been a battle for rent. He told the House frankly that so long as these gentlemen took up that position, and had no respect for the wishes of Parliament, and went back upon the terms they agreed to at the Land Conference, the position would be serious. He had never yet advised any tenant to give his landlord less than would secure his second-term net income. He told the House that if that state of things went on the Ulster tenants would force a settlement upon the lines adopted by Parliament as regarded rent, and they would be justified in doing so as honest citizens.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.) said they had heard a speech from the Irish Chief Secretary, and in that speech he said it was a principle of the Unionist Government to endeavour to ascertain what Irish opinion was and then to endeavour to legislate on those opinions. Upon that principle he could not see why, when Irish public opinion was almost unanimous upon this great question, that legislation should not be introduced. In all other countries if a majority of a nation favoured a particular policy, that policy as a rule was adopted; but the fact that the Irish representatives by a large majority favoured any particular measure was enough to make the Unionist Government go against that measure. If Irishmen regarded a Bill in a certain light it was absolutely certain that the majority of the Unionist Party would go against it. It had been held that, whenever they were able to prove any grievance they only had to bring it before Parliament and it would be removed. Irish Nationalists, however, had always maintained that even if the British Parliament had the time it had not the will to deal with Irish legislation. Even if the British Parliament had the will to legislate for Ireland it had not the time. With regard to education, millions of pounds had been spent upon primary and secondary education in Ireland, and most of the money had been spent in bolstering up a system of education which the vast majority of the Irish people disapproved of, and which they would probably never give their adhesion to. He was bound to say, with regard to the question of Irish education, that he was forced to the conclusion that largely at the bottom of this University and education question, lay the question of bigotry. Those who studied the history of Ireland could arrive at no other conclusion. It would have been far easier in the past for the people of Ireland to have bowed the knee to the oppressor, but they had never been mere time-servers. The history of Ireland showed the rare devotion of her people to their old political and religious faith. If they had been time-servers, they would have bent the knee before the oppressor and accepted the position which was forced upon them by conquest. But the Irish people believed in a higher ideal; they were proud of the sufferings of their forefathers, who had proved their devotion to their country through centuries of persecution. He thought this debate had furnished them with an additional reason for demanding the restoration of their Parliament in Ireland, without which they could never have peace and contentment in that country. The speech of the Chief Secretary was a very remarkable one, and it had furnished them with another proof of the incompetence of this country in dealing with any Irish matter, no matter how thoroughly Irish opinion was made up on the subject. He had heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol give distinct pledges with regard to the University question, and he had also heard the Prime Minister make explicit promises upon the same subject, but not a single one of those promises had been complied with. Did anyone imagine that that state of things could prevail in the Home Rule Parliament? When the Irish Parliament was throttled it had a great future before it, one of its principal Bills would have been directed towards the emancipation of the Irish people. If that Parliament had been allowed to exist they would not now have been discussing the University question, for religious education would have been settled upon a basis honourable to all classes, and useful to the Irish nation. The Irish Parliament, although Protestant, had it continued to exist, would have done more good for Ireland in ten years than this country has attempted to do since the Union was brought about between the two countries.

Whatever test they applied to Home Rule, it could not be denied that British rule in Ireland had been a dismal failure, for the people were now in a chronic state of poverty, and after a wet summer they were in absolute want. During the famine in the West of Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman was compelled to institute Government relief work, and that proved the awful poverty which existed in those districts, although the authorities endeavoured to deny it. In times of distress the men's wages in those districts were as low as 3s. per week, and the highest pay which any able-bodied man got on those relief works was 6s. a week without any food, and even for these miserable wages men in the West of Ireland were prepared to tramp long distances. In most civilised countries which were properly governed the population increased, but in Ireland the population had largely decreased. Since the time of Queen Elizabeth there had not been a reign more disastrous to Ireland than the reign of the late Queen. In the decade 1842 to 1852 more than 4,000,000 people were evicted from homes built by themselves on farms reclaimed by themselves, and within the same period no less than 1,250,000 persons perished from starvation. Even now in his constituency people pointed to the places where the dead carts went round collecting the bodies of those who had died of starvation, and pointed to the vast graves into which, without coffins, they were shot. The remedy for the present state of things was to throw upon the people of Ireland the sense of responsibility and make them accountable for the government of the country. In the dominions of the Empire there were many self-governing colonies, and those colonies had made great progress. In the one case where Home Rule was refused, for some time no progress had been made. Prosperity had always followed the granting of Home Rule. As Mr. Gladstone had said, there were some who believed the Irish had been born with a double dose of original sin, and with such persons there was no arguing, but the Irish people believed they could rule their own country, and that success would attend their efforts. They had been told that it would disintegrate the Empire if Home Rule were granted to Ireland; that if our Parliament was added to those that existed in the Empire, the Empire would crumble to the ground. Such a suggestion was tampering with the intelligence of man. In 1885 he was invited to address a constituency in the Tory interest, and although he did not care for the task he went, and the reason that influenced him was that he was told that if the Unionist Party could be returned with a working majority the Unionist Party would not only grant Home Rule to Ireland, but give the Irish Parliament the right to protect its industries, not only against foreign, but also English imports. It was curious how this policy of Protection should have worked in the minds of the Irish people as it had done ever since 1885. He would ask the English people to get out of their minds the idea that the Irish people could ever give up their attachment to their native Parliament, without which they could have no prosperity or success. If the Government would throw on the people of Ireland the responsibility for controlling their own affairs and preserving law and order in that country they would establish a condition of peace and contentment which none of the Coercion Acts had ever been able to do.

Sir ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said he desired to say a few words, because he was unwilling that no Member on his side of the House should express an opinion on a subject which had so much engrossed the attention of the Liberal Party. He spoke, of course, for himself alone, but he wished to say that he held the same opinion that he held when Mr. Gladstone's proposal was made to the country. It was quite unnecessary to enter on an argument in favour of this policy of Home Rule or upon any question of machinery, or how such a policy was to be carried out. It was a question of principle. The policy was brought forward, not as a matter of plain expediency, but as a matter of sacred duty, and in that light it was regarded by the many hon. Gentlemen who supported Mr. Gladstone's views. He could quite understand that hon. Gentlemen might say they had changed their minds upon this subject. That was a perfectly honourable position to take up, though he did not think it was a wise one. It was also quite competent for hon. Gentlemen to say they thought it necessary to postpone the consideration of this policy; but such a position should be supported by an explicit statement of the reasons why it was taken up, and by an equally explicit statement of the alternative policy. He believed the present time was particularly propitious for entertaining this important question seeing that the House of Commons had been reduced to such a condition of congestion that its business could not be carried on effectively. The Estimates could not now be considered in the way all desired they should be considered, as there were only a limited number of days allowed, great questions of foreign and domestic policy were left unconsidered or not fully considered, and the expenditure of the country did not receive the investigation it should. They all knew the conditions of government in Ireland, and it seemed to him that an opportunity of linking together the interests of Great Britain and Ireland had not been seized. He repeated that he had risen because he thought it desirable that some hon. Members on his side of the House, for themselves only, should express the strong feeling they now entertained, as strong as ever, of the urgent necessity of dealing with this important question.

*Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.) said he thought it was only proper that some statement should be made by the representatives of the North of Ireland with regard to their attitude towards Home Rule. Home Rule, in their opinion, was not local self-government in the terms demonstrated there by several Members; but it was a question of Rome Rule, and it was on that ground that they offered a strenuous opposition. It struck him very forcibly that if they had in Ireland some better manifestation of the spirit of equality towards those who were in a minority, there might be a posibility of giving some considertion to the demands that had been made both by the Irish Members and by the Liberal Party. He remembered so recently as the 22nd or 24th of January that one man in the town of Drogheda was the victim of threatenings and abuse led by three or four Roman Catholic priests, and that in order to obtain the bare necessities of life he had to make application in Dublin. He might refer to persecutions in Limerick or to the persecution of Dr. Long, or to the aims and methods of the recently organised Catholic association which had for its object the boycotting of the Protestants out of their habitations. If Parliament gave such a Party self-government the people to whom he referred would be compelled to look for other places where they could have honest employment, live peaceable lives, and have some equality. He had spoken to many Members who were strongly convinced that Home Rule would be the salvation of Ireland, but if the efforts made for Home Rule in this House by the hon.

Members on the Nationalist Benches were turned in the direction of bringing peace and blessing to the people whom they represented, and to the clerical element of the south and west of Ireland it would have a great deal to do with the enlightenment of Members on the Government side of the House, as to their ability to control their own affairs. The Government had often made concessions to Ireland which in the opinion of some of them had been very one-sided. The proposal to establish a Roman Catholic University was one (no matter what Government brought it in) which would have the strenuous and uncompromising opposition of the Protestants of the north of Ireland. He felt there was a great deal to be said on both sides of the question, but if persons with Protestant convictions were to be literally forced to become members of the United Irish League in order to get the bare necessities of life, what would be the state of affairs if that organisation got the whole control of the affairs of the country? If there was to be no peace until Home Rule were granted they would have to put up with the turmoil and obstruction to which the House was accustomed, and they would appeal to the country to send to this House a majority of Members who were so opposed to Home Rule that business might be carried on notwithstanding the obstruction of Members representing the west and south of Ireland. He denied that this was a question of bigotry and intolerance. Hon. Members opposite had their opinion and they on the Government side of the House had their opinion, which was that they were better under the rule which they had at the present time than they would be if they had a Parliament at College Green, for the simple reason that the hon. Members opposite would always be in the majority, it would be a question of Roman Catholicism *versus* Protestantism, and anything in the interests of the Roman Catholic Church would have the acceptance of the hon. Members, while the minority would be subject to their verdict whether it were right or wrong. He absolutely repudiated the assertion that the Presbyterians of Belfast were in favour of a Roman Catholic University. Whatever might be the opinion of individual members of the Government, he was glad to know that it was not their intention to bring in a Bill this session dealing with this controversial question, on which there was such difference of opinion in Ireland. He hoped that in future Irish Members would not consider him any worse in his bigotry then they were in theirs.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.) said there appeared to be ignorance as to why the Government had not introduced an University Bill for Ireland. The real reason was to be found in the hon. Member for South Belfast; he being the representative of the policy which had rendered it impossible for the Government to grant educational justice to Ireland. The hon. Member was the chief orator of an institution known as the "Customs House steps" in Belfast, the arena of the lovely and beneficent charity he had so beautifully preached this afternoon, but so beneficent was his mission in Belfast that he had been expelled from the Orange Lodge for the intolerance he had displayed. He (the speaker) emphatically denied that there had ever been any intolerance to Protestants as alleged by the hon. Member, but would the House believe that for years the hon. Member himself had been engaged in endeavouring to make the lives of decent and respectable Catholics impossible in Belfast, and in preaching a policy not only of bigotry but of boycotting towards Catholics?

MR. SLOAN: Mr. Speaker, it is scarcely fair that the hon. Member should charge me with advocating boycotting without some fundamental proof of what he says.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN: The police records of the prosecution of his chief associate, a man on whose labour he now bases his reputation, show that his chief associate has been imprisoned for eighteen months for preaching the policy of boycotting and assassination of Catholics.

MR. SLOAN: Might I ask the hon. Member for an instance in which I have been engaged in a mission of boycotting Roman Catholics.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN: The hon. Member has preached at the Customs House steps that his hearers should not go into the houses of Catholic traders—particularly those of Catholic publicans, to whom they are the chief customers.

Mr. SLOAN: May I, with all due respect, say to the hon. Member that the advice I gave to individuals not to go to public-houses was not confined to Catholics but was universal, viz., that they should not go into any public-houses.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN said the hon. Member knew his hearers would go into public-houses of some description, but he urged them not to go into those conducted by Catholics. He did not object to the hon. Member preaching on the Customs House steps in favour of his auditors not going to public-houses, but when he came to the House of Commons with words of peace on his lips while pursuing a policy of hatred against the Catholic minority in Belfast, the House had a right to understand what his position really was. He, however, had risen for the purpose, not of discussing the methods by which the hon. Member carried on his religious propaganda, but of pointing out that the hon. Member was the chief obstacle to the granting of a Catholic University to Ireland. The Chief Secretary had stated that he would leave the matter an open question. It was becoming the customary policy of the Government to leave every matter of transcendent importance an open question. The right hon. Gentleman was, he believed, in favour of educational justice being done; the Prime Minister had made clear pronouncements on the subject. Earl Cadogan had declared for a Catholic University, and other Members in and out of the Cabinet had spoken on the same side—but all these representative men conferred nothing. The position was controlled by Lord Londonderry, who was the agent of the intolerant section in Ireland as he was the agent of all the retrogressive forces in England.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [3rd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

Most Gracious Sovereign,—

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Laurence Hardy.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Mr. JOSEPH DEVLIN said the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in the course of his speech, when defending himself, said it was always his idea to consult Irish opinion in those matters of conduct affecting Ireland which had been before the House for its consideration. The constitutional manner in which the opinion of all peoples could be expressed was through their representatives in this House, but the Irish Members had not been consulted, either directly or indirectly, on any question affecting the well-being of their country. Let them take the question of the University and equality for the Catholics of Ireland. How had Irish opinion been consulted in that matter? Ninety per cent. of the Irish Members of that House were in favour of a measure of education and justice for the Catholics of Ireland. The constitutional will of the Irish nation had been expressed to-day in a manner in which an opinion had not been expressed in any part of the world before. Lord Dunraven, the leading Unionist landlord and the spokesman of the Irish Unionist Party, had actually come forward and submitted a proposal for a University, which had been accepted by everyone who was just and tolerant in the country. Protestant Bishops had come forward and supported that proposal as one worthy of acceptance by the people of Ireland. The Leader of the

Nationalist Party had spoken the will of the great majority of the people of Ireland; great public meetings of all schools of thought in Ireland had been held in every county, at which not only were strong claims made for equity and justice, but passionate appeals made for this great educational reform, and if that was not an expression of the will of the people he could not say what was. The right hon. Gentleman had been talking with his tongue in his cheek. He did not mean what he said. It was his function to present proposals to the House and to govern Ireland, and if he abrogated those functions of government he should let them take the responsibility on their own shoulders. They were the representatives of the great majority, but a little rabid faction in the north of Ireland was to be the deciding factor in matters which so largely affected Ireland. This University question had been dangled before the Irish people for petty and contemptible political purposes. In Gateshead, during the time of the election, Lord Morpeth, the candidate of the Government, held out the promise of a Catholic University for Irelandin order to attract the votes of the English Catholics, and in this way lure the Irish people from the cause for which Irish representatives were pleading to-day. On the other hand, in Ireland, Lord Londonderry appealed to the lowest and basest passions of a small and bigoted minority in order to secure the landlord vote. In relation to the University, the Government had pursued a double-faced and hypocritical policy. The matter had been fully considered by the Government, and yet it was dangled before the Catholic electors of England and Ireland in order that they might be lured away from Home Rule, which was the only thing which could settle the question. He objected, as an Irish Catholic, to being denied those educational advantages, which encouraged intellectual progress and inspired intellectual effort, in the interest of a pampered few in Ireland, who had lived and thrived upon the illiterate and uneducated people of Ireland. The only possible policy for Ireland had been declared from the Irish Benches to-day. He believed if the Government introduced a University Bill to-morrow, it would, like the Land Bill, be unsatisfactory. Home Rule was the only possible means by which this and other great changes for the better, in the interests of the Irish race, could be brought about. Therefore he supported the speakers who had gone before him on those Benches. The Chief Secretary and the Attorney-General of a tottering Government had been unmasked to-day, and the Party of which he was a member — by the strength of its unity, its discipline and belief in its ultimate aims —would compel the Government to give to Ireland that which alone could give satisfaction and ultimate prosperity to their race—namely, Home Rule. This question of the University was not merely one question; it had been introduced into the debate as the last logical reason why the justice which Irish Members as the representatives of their constituents demanded in the name of the Irish people should be given.

At no time before had the people been so united. They had seen that during the hundred years that this Parliament had operated, their country had gone down in population, their lands had gone out of cultivation, and their towns were crumbling to the dust. They had been denied educational advantages, and the only difference now was that everything was being done by the Government with better consideration, although an equally mean policy was being pursued, as in the days when they tried to destroy the Irish nation by more cruel methods. The Government must remember that their policy throughout had failed to give satisfaction to the people. They now said the Irish people were disloyal, and that they did not consider the Empire in the manner in which they ought; therefore the Government had failed not only from an Irish point of view but from an Imperial point of view, and the only policy for this Parliament was to give Ireland a great institution of government of its own, where at least the will of the people would be respected, and where Irish genius and capacity would be allowed fairplay in the government of the country whose destiny and fortunes were committed to their care. Notwithstanding the attempts to make Ireland illiterate, to rob them of those educational advantages which had been given to the minority of Ireland, let them look at what the Irish had done in the path of progress and democracy in every English-speaking nation of the world. In Amercia they could see the Irish capacity for government and Irish brawn and Irish brain building up the fabric of that mighty Republic 3,000 miles away. In Canada the Members of the House of Commons almost unanimously affirmed the desirability and justice of Ireland being given the right to govern itself. In order to retain Australia it was being found necessary practically to tax the food of the people, yet when Canada spoke out in favour of Home Rule for Ireland the late Colonial Secretary did not think it worth while to place the message sent by the Canadian Prime Minister to the King upon the Tables of the Houses until forced to do so by the Irish Party. Therefore in his opinion, on every ground, Ireland was entitled to a Parliament of its own. The University question, raised in the House to-day, was the last great proof of the necessity for Ireland having returned to her her own Parliament, and for his part he was certain with regard to the base charge which had been made against the people, that the tolerant spirit always displayed by them, except in one corner of Ulster, would continue, and the charge against the Catholics that they persecuted those with whose religious creed they disagreed would be found to be false. Leader after Leader of the Irish Party had been Protestants, and it was a slander on the Irish race to say that Irish Catholics had ever treated Irish Protestants with other than the warmest consideration. That attitude would be more accentuated when Ireland received Home Rule. He associated himself with his colleagues on this subject, and declared that whatever might happen to English Parties the Irish question would last until the problem had been solved in the only way in which it could be solved, and when it was solved it would be better for Ireland, for England, and humanity.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said that it was necessary to bring this question forward in order to bring to the blunted intelligence of the people of this country the fact that Ireland was in earnest with regard to this matter. He had been eighteen years in this House, and during that time had never except on one occasion made a speech directly on Home Rule. On the other hand he had never spoken a word in the House on any other subject, whether it concerned Egypt or Peru or anywhere else, without seeing how far he could make his speech affect the Irish question and force it on the attention of the House in such a manner that the House would be glad to get rid of the Irish Members and restore them to their own country. He repudiated the high and optimistic tone of the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman was Under-Secretary of State for War when Lord Wolseley was Commander-in-Chief, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman had read all the evidence in the War Report. Lord Wolseley had said in his evidence that there was a matter which they could not speak of in public or discuss in the House of Commons, and that was the fact that they had to remove Irish Militia regiments to England in time of war and replace them by English Militia regiments, because they could not trust Irishmen in Ireland with arms in their hands, and these were the base methods by which the Union was being kept up.

With regard to what had been said by the hon. and learned Chairman of the Party as to the Members of the Party, the Party was not only a united one but an inapproachable one. Since they had had the franchise they had never touched English money, or accepted place under the Government. They had devoted their energies to going their own way, to obtain their own Parliament on College Green, where Irish laws should be made. So far as the Ulster Unionist Members were concerned, no body of men since 1885 had been so well paid for their loyalty Since 1885, there had been some twenty-eight Ulster Unionist Members in the House, of that number two, and two only, left the House of Commons without getting office or place under the Crown. Three went out of the House before they got their reward, because they died, one left because he was expelled, two left because their pecuniary circumstances necessitated it, five became judges at £3,000 a year, one became a Peer, and the remainder took small minor offices, such as the Mastership of the Mint, and things of that kind. The Chief Secretary, in his finest literary style, said Grattan's Parliament was a failure. It was nothing of the kind, and when Grattan, five years after the Parliament was destroyed, came to this House, he said at the close of his speech, with evident emotion, when referring to that Parliament—

> "The Parliament of Ireland, whose cradle he had rocked, he mourned to its grave."

The old Irish Parliament was composed exclusively of Protestants, and what did that Protestant Parliament do? Why in 1793 they enfranchised Irish Catholics. They admitted Catholics to both grand and common juries and allowed them to form part of the Army, and he believed that had that Parliament not been put an end to by the carrying of the Union it would have given full emancipation to the Irish Catholics. Mr. Lecky had shown in his history that having regard to the tendency of the age the Irish Protestant Parliament was the most liberal Parliament in the world. He believed that Irish Protestants today would be liberal if the English Government would let them alone, and not endeavour to set Protestant against Catholic and Catholic against Protestant. It was ridiculous for English statesmen to say, in Piccadilly language, that the Irish Parliament was a failure. Would the hon. and gallant Member opposite get up and despise the Irish Parliament.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): No.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he was glad the right hon. and gallant Gentleman said "no," although it had weakened the force of the argument he was going to use. To his knowledge the grandfather of the right hon. Gentleman was offered a peerage and a bribe of £30,000 if he would vote for the Union, and he felt sure that his right hon. and gallant friend was now a happier man than if he had been a Peer with a history of that kind behind him. For every word he was about to utter upon this question he had documentary evidence. The Irish Parliament was destroyed for this reason. In the first place there was a revolutionary wave all over the country during the various negotiations between the Irish Secretary and the English Secretary, who was then responsible for Irish government. Negotiations were then going on for the carrying of the Union. At that time the Irish Parliament was on the eve of reforming itself, but it was nevertheless destroyed, and Irish reforms were kept back for another thirty-five years. It was well known in this country at the time that when Irishmen were denied reform they adopted unconstitutional methods, and that was what the people of this country wished Ireland to do in order to give them an excuse for putting an end to the Irish Parliament. The Irish rebellion was fomented by the English Government in order to carry the Union, and it was allowed to go on to a certain stage. One year before the Irish rebellion Lord Castlereagh, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and the Duke of Portland had every step of that revolutionary movement in their hands, and yet they took no steps to suppress it. He wished to tell them what this Irish Parliament which was said to be a failure, had done. It passed all those popular measures to which he had alluded. At that period a meeting of the Irish Bar was held to protest against the Union, and a majority of them voted against it. Three years afterwards, of the thirty-three members of the Irish Bar, only three were not then "placed," and the whole Bench was stuffed with them. Lord Clare, the greatest opponent of Irish rights and liberties, who spoke of Ireland as "this damnable country," said at that time that Ireland was increasing in prosperity at a rate astounding to herself. That was before the Union, but how did her prosperity increase after the Union? Reports of speeches in the House of Commons were not pathetic reading as a rule, and they did not shed tears over the Budgets of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but for the sixteen years after the Union, the Budgets of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were pathetic reading, for they were trying to save their country from the wrong done them by the English Parliament, by which the Irish Parliament was destroyed and robbed.

The Chief Secretary for Ireland, in one of his triumphant periods, said they gave equal rights to Ireland, and that everyone had equal privileges as citizens of this great Empire. He would remind them that Pitt said the same thing when introducing the Union. What equality of laws had they given to Ireland? He did not know anything more mean or dastardly than the conduct of the English Government in endeavouring to withhold from the mass of the Irish people the blessings of University education. Lord Selborne once said that he was the son of a poor clergyman, and he owed his success in life to the fact that his father and mother provided him with a University education, which had enabled him to face the greatest difficulties in life, and yet they denied these advantages to Irishmen, not because they were Catholics, but because they did not wish them to have an equal chance with the privileged minority who have been riding roughshod over the people of Ireland. When they were pleading for the advantages and benefits of an enlightened education for the people of Ireland, did any hon. Member know what Ireland was before the English Government robbed her, for their own base purposes, of the benefits of education? Why, there was scarcely a monastery in northern Europe which did not contain the writings of Irish scholars. Ireland was the land of scholars until the English Government made it the land of Cromwellian settlers. Although he was himself a Protestant, he represented the most Catholic constituency in Ireland. He had been their representative for eighteen years, and he had their confidence and affection. His constituents were devoted to their Catholic principles, but when they returned him to Parliament they had not allowed differences of religion to overreach the question whether he was a true-hearted Irishman or not. When would the most robust of Unionists, who cried themselves hoarse about Imperialism, return a Nationalist from the aristocratic district where they resided. There was no real persecution in Ireland. Persons who said they were persecuted were those who had no true Christian principles, and who had a great deal of sectarian animosity among them. He believed they could appeal to the great heart of the British public to restore to Ireland her own rights and liberties. He asked whether it would not be better to restore to Ireland her liberties instead of letting her continue to hold the English Parties in the position resembling the couple in the old-fashioned barometer, where the little old man came in and the little old woman went out. The English claimed to be apostles of liberty and spoke of giving equal rights to all white men in the Transvaal. Let them give equal rights at home.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said the hon. Member for South Donegal had made a very interesting historical speech, manifesting deep insight and immense muscular power. The hon. Member appeared to be now absolutely certain why the Roman Catholics of South Donegal had chosen him as their representative. He himself thought he knew: it was the spirit of revenge on the British House of Commons, which, he was sorry to say, still rankled in the breasts of some of the Irish people. The hon. Member had given them his opinion of Home Rule. He was glad to hear from his lips—indeed he thought he had heard it from the lips of other hon. Members in times gone by—that Grattan's Parliament was the *beau ideal* of an Irish Parliament.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: We never said so.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said the hon. Member for South Donegal had said so several times in public, but probably he had already forgotten it.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I said it was not a failure.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said he was very glad to hear that the *beau ideal* of an Irish Parliament was one entirely composed of Protestants. But he had never gone so far as that himself. As to the question of Home Rule, of course it was the duty of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford to bring the subject forward, and he was very glad he did. The debate to-night had the advantage that it obviated debates in the course of the next ten days on Irish affairs. [Cries of "No."]

MR. JOHN REDMOND: There is an Amendment on the Land Question.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said that, however that might be, he quite understood the reason of the hon. Member for Waterford in bringing forward the question of Home Rule. The great difficulty in the way of the Irish Home Rule Party in the future would be to get over their own actions during the last ten years. When Mr. Gladstone brought in his Home Rule Bill, Irish Unionists were supposed to be hopelessly bigoted on the subject. One Member opposite—he was not quite sure that it was not the hon. Member for South Donegal—told him that he was entirely mistaken in his views about Home Rule. He said: "If we carry Home Rule you will be placed in a position of great height." He replied that that was very likely, but it would be by means of a rope. He asked any candid Radical opposite whether his views on Home Rule at the present day were exactly the same as they were in 1886, and whether he really believed that if they had a Home Rule Parliament the Protestant minority would be treated with perfect fair play? He remembered hon. Members opposite in some of their speeches saying: "Give us Home Rule and we will be a loyal people." Well, they had an opportunity since then of seeing whether they would be loyal and show fairplay under any circumstances. During the Boer War they had had an opportunity of showing they were not absolutely hostile to the British Empire, instead of which they showed their capacity for Home Rule by using every opportunity of showing their delight and exultation at British reverses. He was not blaming them for that. They had over and over again declared themselves to be the enemies of Great Britain, and he had no doubt they were still. Again, when the Local Government Bill was passed, the hon. Member for Waterford said they would see that the Irish people would exercise fairplay in dealing with the minority, and give them a fair position in managing the affairs of the counties. Outside a few counties in Ulster, where the Loyalist minority predominated, they kicked out, almost to a man, every Loyalist in Ireland. He did not say there were no exceptions, but he defied contradiction, backed by proof of that statement. In his own county, for example, where the minority of Protestants was not so small, they turned out, in almost every case, every Loyalist who stood for a position under the Local Government Act. Everywhere the Nationalists predominated they kicked the Loyalists out of the local bodies. [NATIONALIST cries of "No."] He admitted there were exceptional cases in which Protestants had been returned. The hon. Member who had last spoken was a Protestant sitting for a Nationalist constituency, but the hon. Member was an exception to any rule.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: No, he is not.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): How many Catholics were elected in your own town of Portadown? Not one.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said that if that were so, the town had followed a bad example. But the lesson taught by the county council elections was that under Home Rule the Loyalist Protestant minority would be crushed under foot. If hon. Members had any doubt as to what the result of Home Rule in Ireland would be they should make inquiries. The Nonconformist Members of Parliament, and ministers in this country were in a great majority Radicals. They were very strong Protestants, and they bitterly opposed the Education Bill of last year on Protestant grounds, and yet with all their boasted Protestantism they were perfectly ready to hand over the Irish minority to be trampled upon by the Nationalist politicians. In introducing a Home Rule Bill, and trying to cause the British people to accept a Home Rule Bill, the main stumbling blocks and difficulties which hon. Gentlemen opposite would have to overcome would be those which they themselves had raised and which could not be denied. On the question of University education he listened to the speech of the Chief Secretary with great interest. He knew his opinions before. He had always been perfectly candid about them in the House of Commons. He had told them that the Government would not bring in a Catholic University Bill at present as a Government, which he supposed meant that someone would that session bring in a Bill which would embody his views and probably those of the Prime Minister. He was perfectly certain that if a Bill had been introduced it would have blown the Government into fragments. [Cries of "No, no."] With regard to University education of course anybody who opposed a Roman Catholic University in Ireland was called a bigot. That was the euphemistic way in which the Nationalists described people who were opposed to them on any point. Why were they bigots? He called a bigot a man who tried to force his own religious belief down the throats of other people. He would be the first to oppose a condition of higher education in Ireland which would interfere with anyone's religion. It was well known, and hon. Gentlemen opposite could not deny it, however they might dislike Trinity College, Dublin, it in no way interfered with religion of any kind. Roman Catholics were as free to enter it as Protestants; a Roman Catholic could become Provost, or hold a Fellowship; he could rise in Trinity in the same way as his Protestant fellow countryman. A great change had taken place in Ireland in later years.

The hon. Member for South Donegal had given the House a bit of history. He would also give a small addition to that history which was well worthy of the attention of the House of Commons. In 1795 it was proposed to establish a Roman Catholic College at Maynooth, and a petition was presented to the Irish Parliament by Grattan from the Roman Catholics of Ireland against the proposed establishment of the college. Perhaps the House would allow him to read what these Roman Catholics said in that petition, because curiously enough he absolutely agreed with every word of it. The petition ran as follows—"That the exclusion of persons professing the Protestant religion, or whose fathers profess the Protestant religion, appears to petitioners to be highly inexpedient, inasmuch as it tends to perpetuate that line of separation between His Majesty's subjects of different religions which the petitioners do humbly concede it is the interest of the country to obliterate; and the petitioners do humbly submit that if the youth of both religions were intimates in those branches of classical education which are the same for all, their peculiar tenets would in all probability be no hindrance hereafter to a friendly and liberal intercourse through life; that the petitioners having in common with the rest of their brethren, the Catholics of Ireland, received as one of the most important and acceptable benefits bestowed on them by His Majesty and the Legislature, the permission of having their youth educated along with the Protestant youth of the Kingdom in the University of Dublin, and experience having taught and fully demonstrated the wisdom and ability of that permission, petitioners see with deep concern the principle of separation and exclusion they hoped removed for ever now likely to be revived and re-enacted." That was the view of the Roman Catholics of Ireland at that period.

AN HON. MEMBER on the IRISH BENCHES: Who signed it?

COLONEL SAUNDERSON said that the hon. Member would find it in the Irish Parliamentary Register, Vol. 15, p. 203. Now it was proposed to revive all that, as they learned from a speech made the other day by Archbishop Walsh, at St. Stephen's Green College, Dublin, before those distinguished gentlemen the Jesuit professors. History recorded this lesson, that it was the hands of the priests which had been most opposed to Christianity—[Cries of "Oh, oh!"]—(to his idea of Christianity, progress, and the higher education.) That was a difficulty which the hon. Gentlemen would have to get over whenever another Government sat on the Ministerial Benches; he thought that was a long way off.—[Cries of "Oh, oh!"] The hon. Member for South Tyrone appeared to think that it would be soon. He did not agree with him because he thought the Government had some very remarkably good qualities. He thought so far as their qualities went they were a very respectable lot of men, but he had no doubt in his own mind that the swing of the pendulum would have ceased long ago if affairs had depended altogether on their superhuman merits. But it was the safety which Charles II. took when his brother James warned him of assassination. Charles II. replied, "They would never assassinate me to make you king." He did not in the least tremble for the fate of the Unionist Government. He ventured to say that if the Government brought in a Bill embodying the views of the Chief Secretary and also of the Prime Minister it would blow the Government into fragments. Whatever Government brought in a University Bill, the British people would have to remember that it would and must be a priests' Bill, over which the Roman Catholic clergy would have absolute and supreme control. He wanted to know how the Nonconformists, who so much disliked the Education Acts, would consent to hand over the educational progress of Ireland into the hands of the men who had always tried to stamp it out.

The hon. Member for South Tyrone had given a most gruesome account of the Ulster landlords in his speech about the Irish Land Act. Ulster landlords were accustomed to that from the hon. Gentleman and from Members opposite; but their ideas of Ulster landlords were entirely different from theirs. The hon. Members said that the Ulster landlords refused to sell their estates. That was not his experience. He had offered to sell his estate. The hon. Member for South Tyrone said that the Ulster landlords were trading on the loyalty and peaceable condition of the tenantry. It happened that he had a considerable number of tenants in Cavan. His ancestors had held their property since the reign of James I., and the great majority of his tenants were Roman Catholics, and he did not know in the whole record any instance of the landlord and tenant being on bad terms. Although his tenants were Roman Catholics and, politically, Nationalists, they were as peaceable and friendly a tenantry as those of any man in Ireland, so that he had just as much inducement to withhold selling as the landlord spoken of by the hon. Member for South Tyrone. Yet he had expressed his perfect willingness to sell to his tenants on what he considered fair terms; that was to say, for something which, although it would not provide him with as much as he had at present, would produce something near it. He wanted still to live in Ireland, and he considered that the Land Bill was carried on that very idea, and the bonus given as an inducement to the landlord to enable him to sell to his tenants on those terms. The hon. Member for South Tyrone said the tenants were tired out and would adopt other means, which had been successful in the South and West of Ireland. He was glad the hon. Member was not a tenant of his, for if he thought that the hon. Member was lurking in a ditch or behind a tree——

* **Mr. T. W. RUSSELL** said he did not say that. What he had said was that if these loyal tenants found out they were to be deprived of the rights Parliament intended for them, whilst these rights were to be given to men who had disturbed the peace in the South and West of Ireland, this would make Ulster disloyal, and change the Ulster representation on that side of the House.

Colonel SAUNDERSON said the way the tenants in the South and West emptied out the landlords was by shooting them. That was the great lesson to be learned from the tenants in the South and West who occasionally indulged in the sport. But he did not believe that the Ulster landlords had any intention of taking up this *non possumus* stand. The periodic revaluation by the Land Commissioner was a strong inducement to any landlord to sell, and Irish landlords would be absolute fools if they rejected what he believed to be the most generous and wonderful offer ever made to any tenantry in the world.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Armagh, like many opponents of the demand in Ireland for University education, altogether misrepresented that demand. The right hon. Gentleman would not, he was sure, wilfully misrepresent in the House of Commons the views of those who advocated Irish University education; but he must know that when he declared that the demand was made for a university controlled by the priesthood, he was making a statement notoriously contrary to fact, and which had been repudiated in set terms over and over again by the representatives, not only of the laity, but of the hierarchy and the clergy of Ireland. The right hon. Member for North Armagh was evidently under the impression that it was necessary, in order to neutralise the growing feeling in Ireland for University education, to misrepresent altogether the demand made by the Irish people and priesthood on this matter. The right hon. Gentleman had read a statement contained in a petition presented to the Irish Government at the time of Grattan's Parliament, but there was not a single word in that statement inconsistent with the position now taken up by the Catholic people in Ireland in the demand they were making for a University. There was no desire in the wide world that the youth of Ireland should be permanently separated by religion or other matters. The right hon. Gentleman must know perfectly well that it was the refusal of the claim of equal treatment in the matter of University education that was really bringing about that estrangement and that feeling of separation between the young men of Ireland which was so much deprecated by Grattan, and at the present time. The right hon. Gentleman truly stated that the Prime Minister, whose absence from the debate everyone deplored, was in favour of the claims made by the Catholics of Ireland for a University; and he asked the right hon. Gentleman and the House of Commons if it was conceivable for a single moment that if the claims of University education were such as those described by the right hon. Gentleman, they would receive the sanction or the support of the Prime Minister, or those of his colleagues who had not hesitated to declare in the strongest possible way that they wished this question to be settled. It was not merely the Catholics of Ireland who were making this claim. Nobody knew better than the right hon. Gentleman that this was one of those claims in which the Catholic majority were joined to an extraordinary extent by the Protestant minority in Ireland, and the right hon. Gentleman ought, in common candour, to have informed those who listened to him that this was not a claim of the Jesuit Fathers, the Catholic Bishops, or the laity, but that it was maintained by the vast majority of the Protestant people of Ireland. [Colonel SAUNDERSON: No.] The right hon. Gentleman denied that. He occupied, no doubt, amongst the Protestants of Ireland a position of a considerably representative character, but he must forgive them for saying that, in a matter of this kind and importance, gentlemen like him, who were wedded to the Orange Institution in Ireland, did not represent the majority or the weight of Protestant opinion in Ireland. They preferred in matters of this kind to look for the unbiassed and fair opinion of the people of Ireland in the utterances of men like Lord Dunraven and other eminent Protestant gentlemen, who had quite recently signed a declaration in favour of the settlement of the university question. Not only Lord Dunraven, and Protestant noblemen who carried weight in Ireland among their class, but others in this country had also sanctioned the position of the people of Ireland, which was likewise supported by the Prime Minister and by some Protestant bishops and ecclesiastics in Ireland. At any rate, no man in the House could speak more exactly than he did of what was the feeling in the district he represented, and he said without hesitation that all classes, sections, and creeds in the county of Clare were in favour of the settlement of this question.

A very few weeks ago a meeting was held in that county, attended by the representatives of the masses of the people and by nine-tenths of the representatives of the Protestant landlords and tenantry, and that meeting expressed its strong approval of a settlement of the Irish University question on lines satisfactory to the majority of the people. The right hon. Member for North Armagh seemed to imagine that there was some dark plot on foot to establish in Ireland a University or college which would be absolutely under the control of the Catholic bishops; but the right hon. Gentleman should have stated in fairness that the Catholic bishops had over and over again declared that they made no such demand, and that a college such as was outlined by Lord Dunraven would meet with the approval of the Catholic hierarchy and laity as well. At any rate, the right hon. Member for North Armagh was alone in the House amongst the representatives of Ireland in practically making a protest against what was undoubtedly the expressed desire of the vast majority of the Irish people and of a great majority of the Members of the House who had had an opportunity of expressing their opinion. It had already been pointed out in the debate that the refusal of the Government to deal with this matter was one of the strongest arguments that could be put forward in favour of the establishment of an Irish Government for the management of Irish affairs. What were the facts? This question had been inquired into by a Royal Commission, which had issued a Report in favour of the demand made by the majority of the Irish people, and yet in spite of that the Government, through the lips of the Chief Secretary, declared its inability or unwillingness to deal with the question. He could not say that he was in any way surprised at the decision of the Government. He never expected that the Irish University question, any more than any other Irish question, would be settled unless a period elapsed of agitation and strong protest in Ireland. He ventured to say that it was one of the curses connected with Ireland that no Irish grievance could possibly be remedied until there took place first practically a stage of revolution tempered by want of balance until it became overpowering. He did not know what action would be taken in Ireland when the intention of the Government was known, but he was perfectly certain that in the long run a day would come when it would be admitted that this demand was just and proper, and that in the interests of the Irish people and good government it ought to be conceded. He thought it was altogether unnecessary at that time of day to argue the claims of Ireland to a Catholic University. If he were asked to make out a case for it, he could not do better than refer to the speeches made on the question by the Prime Minister himself, who had proved in the most convincing manner that the Catholics of Ireland suffered from an inequality, that the grievance ought to be remedied, and that until it was remedied it would cause a condition of unrest and dissatisfaction. The debate was initiated not merely for the purpose of raising the University question, but for the purpose of stating broadly and plainly once more the position of the Irish people in reference to their claim for national self-government, and, whatever else the debate might effect, it could not fail to prove that the demand of the Irish people for the restoration of their legislative independence had not changed.

It was now considerably more than thirty years since the question of Home Rule was presented to the House of Commons by Mr. Issac Butt, then the Protestant Leader of the Irish National party. That claim was met by the Irish official of that day just as the present Chief Secretary had met it. The right hon. Gentleman said that while he did not profess to be a prophet, he believed that legislation of a necessary and beneficial character in all directions in Ireland would cause the demand of Ireland for Home Rule to gradually weaken and disappear in the long run. If a Land Act were passed, or any other concession were given, they were told, as Mr. Butt was told thirty years ago, that the Irish nation would settle down, and that the demand for Home Rule would disappear. Thirty years have passed. Land Bill after Land Bill has been passed; there have been new concessions in every direction and well-intentioned efforts to meet the grievances of Ireland,—some of them more or less successful—and what had been the result on the Home Rule demand? It had been to intensify, if possible, the desire of the Irish people to rule themselves; and after thirty years of attempts to satisfy Ireland, that country sent the overwhelming majority of her representatives in this House to demand as emphatically, as clearly, and as unhesitatingly as ever the right to govern herself in her own way. The hon. Member had said that he had spent a third of his life in Parliament, but he had spent just half his life in the House of Commons, and he had often wondered that it had never occurred to the ordinary English Member that the Home Rule question, so far from being merely a great Irish question, was also a great English question. No doubt could be entertained that if Ireland suffered from the lack of Home Rule, England and the House of Commons undoubtedly lacked self-government and Home Rule in English affairs which might have been enjoyed were it not that the Irish question was being eternally presented.

There were not, he was sorry to say, any Members who directly represented the working-classes in Great Britain. He wished heartily and sincerely that there were more. The working-classes were relieved of most pressing and necessary reforms, but the affairs of the British people had been blocked, because it had been proved that there was no proper time to consider the affairs of three great countries like England, Ireland, and Scotland. The Chief Secretary said that his idea was that Ireland and Great Britain should be equal partners in the legislative establishment, but at the very bottom of their claim for Home Rule was the argument that, however willing the House of Commons might be to do justice to Ireland, it had not the necessary time. Why should the Irish people, the English people, or the Scottish people have to wait in order to have pressing matters affecting their country attended to? The Chief Secretary and the Attorney-General, who knew Ireland perfectly well—few people better—know that there were matters connected with every Department in Ireland which called for legislation, and that if they were attended to they alone would occupy the time of Parliament for a whole session, yet the Irish people were obliged to wait until English affairs, Scottish affairs, and Imperial affairs had been attended to. If he were an English representative he would feel not only impatient but indignant to the last degree if he found that his opportunity of benefiting his constituents was impaired and interfered with year after year by the discussion of Irish affairs. He did not know whether it had been observed by the majority of Members of the House of Commons or not, but he himself was absolutely convinced that there was a movement among the masses of the English people in the direction of Home Rule. He did not say it was a movement prompted altogether by sympathy with the demands of the Irish people, but there was a demand in the direction of Home Rule in the interests of Scotland and Wales as well as of Ireland. and he was convinced that a century would not have advanced very far before an attempt would be made to settle the question. He had often asked himself on what really was the opposition to Home Rule based. The Chief Secretary said he could conceive no change from the present system short of an independent Government in Ireland, such as the system in existence in Norway and Sweden. It was no part of the business of the Irish people in the present time, and in the absence of any desire on the part of the Government to deal with the matter, to go into the details of the system of self-government which would be acceptable to them, but did the right hon. Gentleman consider the system of government which prevailed at present in over a score of different parts of the British Empire which had absolute and complete legislative independence? Only the other day Sir Wilfrid Laurier said that the first thing which tended to maintain and consolidate the British Empire was the system of absolute self-government, which prevailed in every part of it except Ireland. He could not understand how those who gladly conceded to different parts of the Empire the fullest system of self-government refused a similar system to Ireland, where the existing Government had been proved to be a lamentable failure. He had never been able to get from any British citizen a satisfactory explanation of the opposition to Home Rule. It was not that the Irish people were incapable of managing their own affairs. The Attorney-General, Chief Secretary, Lord-Lieutenant, and all connected with the Irish Government had conceded that the Irish people would be able to govern themselves in as capable and intelligent a manner as the people of any other part of the English-speaking world. Was the demand refused because of fear of what a self-governing Ireland might do to England? The right hon. Gentleman referred in his speech, as he invariably did, to the attitude of Ireland in connection with the late war. He supposed the argument at the bottom of that was that because the Irish people were on the side of freedom it would be unsafe to give them any legislative powers that might be used against England. No one who had inquired into the powers of the Parliament proposed by Mr. Gladstone would have the slightest fear that it would be able to do any injury to England. He would go further and say that an Irish Government sufficient for the wants of the Irish people would have no intention and no desire whatever beyond governing Ireland wisely and well.

Not only were the Irish Members opposed to the Boer War, but a large number of the British Members and a large section of British people were also opposed to it, and it was now beginning to be proved that the men who were opposed to it were the best friends of this country. The result of the war had absolutely justified the warnings and forecasts of the Irish and Radical Members who opposed it. They were told that it was to protect the interest of British subjects in South Africa that the war was undertaken, yet the very first result had been to oust English, Scottish, and Welsh labour from South Africa in favour of Asiatic labour, which was a curse in every country where it was found, and which would make South Africa not only not worth fighting for but not worth living in. In opposing the war the Irish people were actuated by the same feeling as they were at the time of the American War of Independence. At that time, too, gentlemen like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Armagh said that the war was being opposed by wretched Irish rebels who were the enemies of England. It was quite true that the Irish people were in full and complete sympathy with the Americans in the War of Independence, but it is now proved that the men who protested against that war were right, and if the advice of the Irish people had been then taken America might to-day be a portion of the British Empire. He ventured to assert, and he thought he might appeal even to members of the Dublin Castle Government to bear out his opinion, that so far from there being the slightest desire, inclination, or intention on the part of the majority of the Irish people to interfere with any section of the inhabitants on account of their religious belief, exactly the opposite was the case, for it could never be said of the Irish people that they persecuted anyone on that account. He deplored, as all Irishmen must deplore, that in certain parts of the country, where semi-political and semi-religious associations existed, feeling at times ran very high, but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Armagh as well as the hon. Member for South Belfast, need not imagine that because they represented Ulster Protestant and Orange constituencies they had a monopoly of all knowledge of the condition of affairs in the North of Ireland. There were many sitting beside him who also represented Ulster constituencies, and he for seven years represented one in which the people were nearly equally divided between Roman Catholics and Protestants. He knew the danger that arose from the bitter feeling there created, and he was therefore the more convinced that it only needed the establishment of an Irish Parliament, with full, fair, and just powers, in order to put an end at once and for all to that hateful system of religious rivalry which undoubtedly made life at times in certain parts of Ireland almost unbearable. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh posed as if he and his friends were afraid of the majority of the people of Ireland should they get the power in their hands——

Colonel SAUNDERSON: Not in the least.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said he did not mean to suggest that the right hon. Gentleman was physically afraid of anybody. The point was that he seemed to be under an apprehension that the majority of the people in Ireland would do injustice to the minority, and that where the Catholics were in an overwhelming majority they would be guilty of persecution and unwarrantable interference with those who were of a different religion. He ventured to assert that no instance could be cited in the South of Ireland where that had proved to be the case.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON: I should say Limerick.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he was glad that the case of Limerick had been mentioned, because it enabled him to call the attention of the House to the fact that that case had been discussed over and over again, and that the complaint had been proved to have no foundation in fact. He would repeat that in those portions of Ireland where the Catholics were in an overwhelming majority the Protestant minority lived in the most absolute security, in peace, and on friendly terms with their neighbours. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh was an old opponent of his in that House. They had faced one another for years and advocated their respective opinions, but he did not believe the right hon. Gentleman would get up in his place and express his opinion that if the Nationalists obtained the controlling voice in the Government of Ireland they would tolerate interference with or persecution of any men or any set of men on account of their religious beliefs. It was therefore unworthy on the part of the Government to decline to satisfy the aspirations of the people of Ireland because of an unfounded fear of religious intolerance which had never been proved to exist. It could not be denied that at the present time the Government of Ireland was carried out practically in compliance with the wishes and desires of the minority of the people, and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman had that day had the satisfaction of hearing the Minister responsible for Irish affairs state that the passionate demand of the vast majority of the Irish people in connection with education was to be ignored in consequence of the representations made by himself and his friends in the North of Ireland. Such a state of things could not possibly conduce to good government in Ireland, or to the satisfaction and contentment of the Irish people. It could not possibly strengthen the Empire or facilitate the transaction of business of pressing importance in connection with England, Scotland, and Wales, and surely it was not too much for them to ask at the commencement of a new century that a new system should be tried for governing Ireland. No one could deny that the present system had been a dismal failure, and that ever since the Irish people had been deprived of their Parliament dissatisfaction and discontent had prevailed there. If he were a British Member he would look forward to the commencement of a new century under the old system with great misgiving. The position was intolerable. It was, of course, within the power of a majority of the people through their representatives to maintain the present system, but as long as it was maintained the Irish people would continue to send representatives to renew again and again the demand for the restoration of the right to rule themselves, and they made that demand once more that night in the confident belief that sooner or later it would be granted, and that the British people would find that their best policy would be to trust the Irish people and to treat them no longer as outcasts and rebels, but to recognise that they were as much entitled to manage their own affairs and to rule their own destinies as any one of the great self-governing colonies which England possessed in other parts of the world.

There were those who at the present time were prepared to make any sacrifices for what they called the permanence and consolidation of the British Empire, and sacrifices of an extremely grave character were likely to be demanded of the people. Indeed they were to be asked to tax their food in order to earn the goodwill of our colonial possessions. But it was an insult to our colonies to insinuate at the present time that any sacrifice was required on the part of the masses of the British people to secure them contentment and satisfaction in their possessions. He believed that the colonies were satisfied and contented and that they would remain so because they possessed the fullest right of controlling their own affairs, and to interfere in the faintest manner with any of those rights would be a very serious matter. The possession of independent legislative powers had made the British Empire a success in every portion of the globe, and it was noteworthy that Ireland was the one spot in the whole English-speaking portion of the globe which was discontented and disloyal under the British flag. The time had arrived when the question of giving Ireland national self-government might be dealt with with great advantage and good result to the majority of the British people. If the demand was to be opposed let it be opposed not on grounds which were insulting to the Irish people and untrue in their character, but upon reasonable and fair argument. Let them not suggest that it was opposed in order to protect the Protestants of Ireland against persecution by the Catholic majority. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh had long been the advocate of the present system of government in Ireland. Those with whom he had been associated had received posts as the rewards of their advocacy of British rule, and the right hon. Gentleman presented an almost pathetic picture in his loneliness on those Benches. He was practically left absolutely alone to fight this battle. They were told by the Unionists of Ulster they were in dread of Home Rule, and that they regarded the question as even more important than the fiscal dispute which was now raging. The were told further that they were prepared to fight to the last breath, but the arguments advanced against Home Rule were exactly of the same description as those which had been put forward for the last twenty-five years, and they heard the old story of the Jesuitical desire to curtail the knowledge of the people and the customary complaint of the Irish Members' opposition to such unnecessary enterprises as the Boer War. The hon. Member for Donegal in an interesting historical speech had made reference to Grattan's Parliament, and had referred to the fact that one of the ancestors of the right hon. Gentleman was a staunch opponent of the Union and of the destruction of the Irish Parliament. Surely there was no reason why, under fair and equal laws, a descendant of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman might not, like his ancestor, take his place side by side with the majority of the people of Ireland, and help in governing the country wisely and beneficially in the interests of the whole people. He could only say, in conclusion, that nothing would satisfy the people of Ireland except the concession of those rights of self-government which he believed every common sense man was in favour of granting at the present time.

*Mr. MOON (St. Pancras, N.) said he desired to draw the attention of the House to a subject mentioned in two paragraphs of His Majesty's Speech. It was evident that His Majesty's Ministers as well as the House recognised the urgency of the question connected with the Balkan Peninsula, and the gravity and seriousness of the situation even a year ago was indicated in the despatch of February 17th, 1903, by theS ecretary of State to our Ambassador at Vienna—a despatch which recapitulated the observations that Lord Lansdowne had made to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador on the same day. The despatch stated that the—

> "Government had, for a long time, been deeply convinced of the necessity for the introduction of measures of practical reform in Macedonia."

He would have liked to sketch the course by which the inequalities and the economic pressure in European Turkey had become more and more serious and especially in proportion as large slices and tracts of European Turkey had been lopped off, but the hour did not permit. The House was aware that in spite of the repeated declarations of the Porte that all the subjects of the Sultan were equal, there had been no approach to equality. From time to time the Softas or theological students of Constantinople were allowed to spread over European Turkey and preach what might be called anti-Christian crusades, in a manner which had excited the Moslem population against their Christian fellow-subjects. The result had been that at different times during the last half-century there had been a dismal cycle of oppression, revolt, suppression, or repression. The rebels had not observed the rights of property; they had in many cases behaved atrociously, but they had not been guilty of the appalling outrages against women and children that had stained the action of the Turkish troops, whether regular or irregular.

According to the despatch of Lord Lansdowne, dated September 21st, 1903—

> "Acts had been perpetrated which, after making every allowance, must be condemned as quite inexcusable on the part of the authorities and forces of an established Government."

Under these circumstances it was imperative that no time should be lost in introducing effective and adequate reforms. In January last Austria-Hungary and Russia propounded a scheme of reform which the Turkish Government accepted in less than a week, and offered to apply it to the other vilayets of European Turkey. Then there was intolerable delay; in August the insurgents commenced rising, and it was not until September that fresh steps were taken, when the Secretary of State, realising that things had got still worse, telegraphed to Sir Francis Plunkett, requesting him to place before the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Governments two alternatives, the first of which was the—

> "Appointment of a Christian Governor unconnected with the Balkan Peninsula or with the Powers signatory of the Treaty of Berlin."

His noble friend would doubtless say that during the last month a start had been made in putting matters on a satisfactory basis, but he would remind the House that a gendarmerie under European officers had been established in Turkey before, and the delay certainly gave colour to the doubts entertained in many parts of Europe as to the disinterested character of the action of Austria-Hungary and Russia. He had an Amendment to the Address on the Paper with regard to Macedonia, but he did not propose to move it. He did not wish to be impatient, nor did he say that fairly vigorous steps were not now being taken, now that M. Demerik and Herr von Müller were in Macedonia and that General de Giorgis had arrived at Constantinople, but he did desire to express the hope that the Government would watch closely, carefully, and thoroughly the course of the reforms, that they would bear in mind that their Secretary of State had proposed the alternative of a Christian Governor, and that the little States—Denmark, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium—concerned in that alternative had from time to time produced great and efficient men. He hoped if before the end of the winter these reforms did not produce effect the Government would revert to the first alternative.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton) said it was an unfortunate hour to go into this very important question, but he did not think it was necessary to go back to the unhappy state of things which they found in Macedonia. There was no doubt that England was the chief mover in obtaining the cancelling of the San Stefano Treaty when Russia was near Constantinople, but their responsibility was shared by the other Powers which were signatories to the Treaty of Berlin. They made themselves responsible with England for the reforms to be carried out, not only in Macedonia, but in Armenia. The hopes and promises had been entirely disappointed, and practically nothing had been done. In the words of Lord Salisbury, they had put their money on the wrong horse. It was unnecessary to attempt to apportion blame between different parties. The revolutionary bands, no doubt, had much to answer for, but it must be admitted they were subjected to great provocation, that a large number of helpless and guiltless people had suffered in consequence of the existing state of disorder (which had been becoming acute ever since the Greek War), and that the scheme of reorganisation had had no practical result. It could not be wondered at that when the disturbances entered upon an acute stage the English Foreign Secretary should have endeavoured to place the reforms on a wider and a more practicable basis, and should have suggested the appointment of a Christian Governor which was practically the only solution. Unfortunately, however, he suggested an alternative, and that alternative of a Mussulman Governor with Christian advisers had been adopted, and yet there had been no reforms instituted. Meantime, the winter was passing, and the outlook did not appear to justify the sanguine hope expressed in the Speech from the Throne. Russia, by practically excluding the vilayet of Adrianople from the proposed scheme, had shown that she was not eager for reform, and it was difficult to believe that she had any desire to see an autonomous State or an enlarged Bulgaria interposed between her and the sea. He could not but think that her desire was to maintain the *status quo*, leaving things to continue in their present rotten condition. Meantime Turkey was growing weaker and weaker; she had lost the nations which once formed her strength, but she was hoping that Russia would be so fully occupied in the East as to have no time to press reforms upon her. The outlook was serious. The Bulgarians were in a far stronger position than a year ago, their army had been reorganised, and there could be but little doubt that if Russia's hands were fully occupied by affairs in the East, Bulgaria would be inclined to try conclusions with Turkey. He hoped that some of those practical measures which were foreshadowed in Lord Lansdowne's dispatch of September would shortly occupy the attention of His Majesty's Government. He assured them of his warm appreciation of the interest they were taking in this matter, and his belief in their earnest desire, in difficult circumstances, to assert England's humanity and wish to see good government re-established in these regions, and by the establishment of independent States to form the surest barrier against Russian advance to the South that could be secured. While assuring the Government of the desire of himself and his friends to support them, he felt bound to express their firm belief that unless strong measures were taken in the next few months hostilities would commence, and there would be a scene of misery, misrule, and general agitation involving extreme danger to the whole of the South-East of Europe.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.) expressed satisfaction with the references to Macedonia in the King's Speech, which satisfaction would certainly not be diminished by the tone and terms of the speech of the Secretary of State yesterday in another place. No one would be disposed to quarrel with the principles as laid down by the Secretary of State as being those which should govern the action of the British Government in the matter. But while there was every reason to thank the Government for the attitude they had taken up, there were only too serious grounds for believing that the reform scheme to which they had given their adhesion would not meet the necessities of the case. It was marked by grave omissions and defects. The House would be interested to hear the reasons for the entire omission from the scheme of reform of the vilayet of Adrianople, to which there were very grave reasons why the same control should be extended. He had recently visited that vilayet, and everywhere he came across villages in ruins, some actually burned to the ground, and others practically deserted by the inhabitants. In fact, the portion of the vilayet of Adrianople nearest to the Black Sea was really a desert. The population had indeed escaped some of the more atrocious sufferings of the winter, to which the people of the vilayet of Monastir had been subjected; but there was only too grave reason for saying that the state of Adrianople was no less bad than that of any other part of the provinces which had been the subjects of the recent troubles.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

On the Motion for the adjournment of the House,

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara) asked whether the Government had any information confirming the report that Russia had declared war.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): No, sir; none whatever.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 4th February, 1904.

SAT FIRST.

The Viscount Colville of Culross sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—

Acton Improvement.

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway.

Amersham, Beaconsfield, and District Water.

Appleby Corporation Gas.

Arlesey Gas.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway.

Barnard Castle Gas.

Barnet District Gas and Water.

Barrow-in-Furness Corporation.

Barry Railway (Extension of Time, &c.).

Barry Railway (Steam Vessels).

Belfast and North-East Ireland Electricity and Power Gas.

Belfast Corporation (Tramways).

Bexhill Corporation.

Bexhill Water and Gas.

Birkdale Improvement.

Bishop's Stortford and District Gas.

Blyth and Cowpen Gas.

Bournemouth Corporation (Tramways).

Bridlington Corporation.

Bristol Corporation.

Brixham Gas.

Brymbo Water.

Buxton Urban District Council.

Cambrian Railways.

Cardiff Railway.

Carlisle Corporation.

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway.

Cheshire Electricity and Power Gas.

Chesterfield Corporation (Tramways and Improvements).

Chesterfield Gas and Water Board.

Chippenham Gas.

Colney Hatch Gas.

Corbridge Gas.

Corporation of London (Southwark and other Bridges).

Croydon Gas.

Crystal Palace District Gas.

Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power.

Derwent Valley Water Board.

Doncaster Corporation.

Donegal Railway.

East Argentine Railway.

East London and Lower Thames Electric Power.

Ebbw Vale Urban District Water.

Edwardes Square Protection.

Elysée Palace Hotel Company.

Felixstowe Gas.

Filey Improvement.

Gas Light and Coke and other Gas Companies Acts Amendment.

Gomersal Gas.

Gosport Water.

Great Central and Midland Joint Railways.

Great Central Railway.

Great Eastern Railway.

Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats).

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time).

Great Northern Railway.

Great Western Railway.

Great Yarmouth Corporation.

Hampton-in-Arden Gas.

Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas.

Harrogate Waterworks Tramroad.

Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways.

Holywood Tramways.

Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment).

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock.

Hutcheson's Hospital and Hutcheson's Educational Trust (Substituted Bill).

Ipswich Dock Commission.

Isle of Thanet Light Railways.

Kettering Improvement.

King's College Hospital.

Kirkby-in-Ashfield Urban District Gas.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Steam Vessels).

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Various Powers).

Lancashire Electric Power.

Leeds Corporation (Consolidation).

Leeds Corporation (Waterworks) Railway.

Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power.

Leyton Urban District Council.

Lincolnshire and Yorkshire Electric Power.

Littlestone-on-Sea and District Water.

Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company.

Liverpool and Wigan Churches.

Llanelly Harbour.

London and India Docks Company.

London and North-Western Railway.

London, Camberwell, and Dulwich Tramways.

London, Chatham, and Dover Railway.

London County Council (General Powers).

London Port and Docks.

London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway.

Lytham Improvement.

Maidenhead Bridge.

Manchester Corporation (General Powers).

Manchester Corporation Tramways.

Manchester Ship Canal.

Manchester Ship Canal (Finance).

Matlock and District Gas.

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

Metropolitan District Railway.

Metropolitan Railway.

Midland Railway.

Milwr and District Mines Drainage.

Minehead Urban District Council Water.

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway.

Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway.

Newcastle and Gateshead Water.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation.

New River Company.

New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company.

North and South Woolwich Electric Railway.

North Staffordshire Railway.

North-Western Electricity and Power Gas.

Norwich Water.

Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council.

Oakengates, Dawley and District Joint Water Board.

Plymouth and North Devon Direct Railway (Abandonment).

Plymouth Corporation.

Portmadoc, Beddgelert and South Snowdon Railway.

Preston and Blackburn Tramways.

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways.

Preston Corporation Water.

Radcliffe Tramways and Improvement.

Reading Corporation.

Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water.

Romford and District Tramways (Extensions).

Ryde Gas.

Saddleworth and Springhead Tramways (Abandonment).

St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

St. Marylebone Electric Lighting.

St. Mary Woolnoth.

Selby Urban District Council.

Sheffield, Laughton, and Maltby Railway.

Sheppy Gas.

Shipley Urban District Council.

Skipton Water and Improvement.

Soothill Nether Urban District Tramways.

Southend-on-Sea Gas.

Southend Water.

Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time).

South Shields Gas.

South Staffordshire Mines Drainage.

South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time).

Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway.

Stretford Urban District Council.

Surrey Commercial Dock.

Sutton Gas.

Swindon Corporation.

Thames River Steamboat Service.

Thames Steamboat Trust.

Thurles Urban District Council Water.

Ticehurst and District Water and Gas.

Tottenham Improvement.

Tynemouth Corporation.

Tynemouth Gas.

Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads.

Ulster Electric Power.

Victoria University of Manchester.

Victoria University of Yorkshire.

Wallasey Tramways and Improvements.

Watford and District Tramways (Extension of Time).

Weaver Navigation (Additional Finance).

Weaver Navigation (Constitution and Finance).

Wellington (Somerset) Gas.

West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment).

West Metropolitan Railway (Extension of Time).

Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier.

West Riding Tramways.

Whitby Gas.

Withnell Gas.

Wolverhampton Corporation.

Yorktown and Blackwater Gas.

And the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with:—

Coulsdon Tramways.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements).

North Wales Electric Power.

Rotherham Corporation.

Trafford Park Dock and Railway.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES (SCOTLAND).

Forty-seventh Annual Report of the Registrar-General (Abstracts of 1901).

WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.

Account of the sums received and paid in respect of the wages and effects of deceased seamen in the year ended 31st March, 1903.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

GENERAL LIGHTHOUSE FUND.

Account of the General Lighthouse Fund, under the Acts 57 and 58 Vict. c. 60, s. 679, and 61 and 62 Vict. c. 44, showing the income and expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1903.

SEAMEN'S SAVINGS BANKS (MONEY ORDERS, AND TRANSMISSION OF WAGES).

Account of all deposits received and repaid by the Board of Trade on account of Seamen's Savings Banks, under the authority of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, during the year ended 20th November, 1902, and of the interest thereon; statement showing the number and amount of seamen's money orders issued and paid at ports in the United Kingdom and at ports abroad from 1855 to 31st March, 1903; also statement showing the receipts and payments in connection with the transmission of seamen's wages, home and foreign, from 1878 to 31st March, 1903.

RAMSGATE HARBOUR.

Statement of the receipts and payments made by the Board of Trade for the year ended 31st March, 1903; together with an account of the receipt and issue of stores.

ROYAL PARKS AND GARDENS.

Rule for Holyrood Park; Provisional Rule for Hyde Park, St. James' and the Green Parks, Regent's Park, Greenwich Park, Hampton Court Park, Hampton Court Gardens, Richmond Park and Green, and Bushy Park.

COUNTY COURT, ENGLAND (FEES).

Treasury Order, dated 30th December, 1903, regulating Court fees in County Courts.

POST OFFICE.

(Money Orders). Statutory Rules and Orders (1903), No. 806.

(Telegraphs). Account showing the gross amount received, and the gross amount expended, in respect of the Telegraph Service from the date of the transfer of the telegraphs to the State to the 31st day of March, 1902 (in continuation of No. 31, of Session 1903).

BUILDING SOCIETIES.

Ninth Annual Report by the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies of the proceedings of the Registrars under the Building Societies Acts; with an abstract of the annual accounts and statements of the societies for the year 1903.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Order, dated 23rd September, 1903, entitled the Foreign Animals (Amendment) Order of 1903 (No. 3).

Order, dated 2nd February, 1904, defining a foreign animals quarantine station at the port of Southampton.

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Annual Accounts of Exchequer Bills and other Government Securities purchased.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE FISCAL QUESTION.

The Earl of WEMYSS: My Lords, there is a notice standing in my name on the Paper to the effect that a humble Address be presented to His Majesty praying him to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report on the present state and prospects of our trade, and whether any change or other action is needed in furtherance thereof. I had put this Motion down for Monday, but since I gave the notice I find that a great meeting is to be held at the Guildhall on that day, so I would ask leave to postpone the Motion till to-morrow week as the more convenient course.

***The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of Lansdowne)**: Lord Wemyss having postponed his Motion, and Lord Newton having put off the Motion standing in his name until Tuesday week, there are no further Orders on the Paper, and I understand, therefore, that it will be convenient to adjourn until Thursday next. I move to that effect.

The Marquess of RIPON: We see no objection on this side of the House to the adoption of the course suggested by the noble Marquess. There is a Chapter of the Garter fixed for Tuesday at Windsor, which will take away a number of noble Lords.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of Halsbury): The judicial business will, of course, proceed as usual.

***The Marquess of LANSDOWNE**: Certainly. I exclude the judicial sittings from my Motion.

On Question, Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 4th February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Acton Improvement Bill. "To confer upon the Urban District Council of Acton further powers with regard to the supply of electricity and the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Amersham, Beaconsfield, and District Water Bill. "To extend the limits of supply of the Amersham, Beaconsfield, and District Waterworks Company, Limited, and to confer further powers upon that Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Arlesey Gas Bill. "For extending the limits of supply of the Arlesey Gas Company; for the raising of additional capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill. "To authorise the Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Company to acquire additional lands; to confer further powers; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Barnet District Gas and Water Bill. To enable the Barnet District Gas and Water Company to acquire additional lands, construct additional works, and raise further capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Bexhill Water and Gas Bill. "To extend the limits of supply of the Bexhill Water and Gas Company; to authorise the Company to raise additional capital, and to construct additional waterworks; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Birkdale Improvement Bill. "To authorise the Urban District Council of Birkdale to acquire land to construct an outfall sewer, and to make further provision in regard to the health, local government, improvement, and finance of the urban district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Bishop's Stortford and District Gas Bill. "For incorporating and conferring powers on the Bishop's Stortford and District Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill. "To confer further powers on the Blyth and Cowpen Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Brixham Gas Bill. "For incorporating and conferring powers on the Brixham Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Brymbo Water Bill. "To authorise the Brymbo Water Company to extend their limits of supply, to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Carlisle Corporation Bill. "To extend the boundaries of the city of Carlisle, to consolidate the parishes in the city into one parish, to make further and better provision for the health, good government, and improvement of the city; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill. "For conferring further powers upon the Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Cheshire Electricity and Power-Gas Bill. "For incorporating and conferring powers on the Cheshire Electricity and Power-Gas Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Chippenham Gas Bill. "For incorporating and conferring powers on the Chippenham Gas Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Colney Hatch Gas Bill. "To authorise the Colney Hatch Gas Company to raise additional capital, to acquire lands, to enlarge their works, to alter name of company, to amend their existing Acts; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Corbridge Gas Bill. "For incorporating and conferring powers on the Corbridge Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Corporation of London (Southwark and other Bridges) Bill. "To empower the Corporation of London to rebuild Southwark Bridge, and to confer other powers upon them with respect to that and other bridges; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Croydon Gas Bill. "To change the name of Croydon Commercial Gas and Coke Company to 'the Croydon Gas Company,' and to confer further powers on the Company with respect to the raising of additional capital, the construction and maintenance of additional gas works; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Crystal Palace District Gas Bill. "To alter the provisions of the Acts of the Crystal Palace District Gas Company with respect to the illuminating power of gas supplied by them and the testing of g s; to change the name of the Company to 'the South Suburban Gas Company'; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Doncaster Corporation Bill. "To confer further powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of Doncaster with reference to their water, gas, and electricity undertakings; to make further and better provision with regard to the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the said borough; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Donegal Railway Bill. "To authorise the Donegal Railway Company to raise further moneys by the creation and issue of guaranteed preference stock for the purpose, amongst others, of completing the Ballyshannon Extension, and to empower the Company to own and work motor-cars and other vehicles; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

East London and Lower Thames Electric Power Bill. "For incorporating and conferring powers on the East London and Lower Thames Electric Power Company," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Felixstowe Gas Bill. "To incorporate and confer powers upon the Felixstowe Gas Light Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Gas Light and Coke and other Gas Companies Acts Amendment Bill. "To amend the Gas Light and Coke and other Gas Companies Acts Amendment Act, 1880; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Gomersal Gas Bill. "For consolidating the capital of the Gomersal Gas Company; for enabling that Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Great Central and Midland Joint Railways Bill. "To constitute as a separate undertaking certain Railways of the Sheffield and Midland Railway Companies' Joint Committee and certain other Railways authorised to be constructed by the Great Central and Midland Railway Companies jointly; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Great Central Railway Bill. "To authorise the construction of new works and the acquisition of lands by the Great Central Railway Company in connection with their undertaking; the construction of new Railways by the Cheshire Lines Committee and the Seaforth and Sefton Junction Railway Company respectively, and the acquisition of lands by the Great Western and Great Central Railways Joint Committee and the Manchester South Junction and Altrincham Railway Company respectively in connection with their respective undertakings; the acquisition by the Great Central Railway Company of the undertakings of the Wrexham, Mold, and Connah's Quay and Buckley Railway Companies; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Great Eastern Railway Bill. "For conferring further powers on the Great Eastern Railway Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill. "To amend the powers of the Great Eastern Railway Company with respect to the use of steam vessels," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Great Northern and City Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. "To extend the time for the completion of railways; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Great Northern Railway Bill. "To confer powers on the Great Northern Railway Company with reference to the construction of works and the purchase of lands; to extend the time limited for the compulsory purchase of certain lands by the Company; to empower the Company and the Great Central Railway Company to purchase lands, and to extend the time for the compulsory purchase of certain lands by those Companies; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Hampton-in-Arden Gas Bill. "To incorporate the Hampton-in-Arden and Meriden Gas Company, and to enable that company to supply with gas certain parishes in the county of Warwick," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill. "To confer powers on the Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Company for widening and altering roads and acquiring lands in the counties of Middlesex and London; to authorise the sale of the undertaking of the company to the Metropolitan Electric Tramways, Limited, and to provide for the dissolution and winding-up of the Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill. "To empower the Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Company to construct a new dock with connecting railway and other works and entrance into the River Humber; to abandon the dock and works authorised by The Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Act, 1901; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Kettering Improvement Bill. "To make further and better provision with regard to the electric light undertaking of the Council, and for the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Kirkby-in-Ashfield Urban District Gas Bill. "To empower the Urban District Council of Kirkby-in-Ashfield to supply gas and to provide for the transfer to the Council of so much of the gas undertaking of the Sutton-in-Ashfield Urban District Council as is situate within the urban district of Kirkby-in-Ashfield; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill. "To authorise the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company to provide and work steam vessels between the ports of Goole and Hull and certain Continental ports; and to subscribe to the funds of steamship companies; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Various Powers) Bill. "To authorise the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company to construct new railways; to widen certain existing railways, and to construct other works; to acquire additional lands; and to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Leeds Corporation (Consolidation) Bill. "To consolidate, with amendments, certain of the local Acts in force within the city of Leeds; to make further provision in regard to the various undertakings of the Corporation, and to make better provision for the health and local government of the city; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Leyton Urban District Council Bill. "To authorise the Urban District Council of Leyton, in the county of Essex, to construct and work tramways, and to confer further powers on the Council in regard to their tramways undertaking and their electrical undertaking; to empower the Council to execute certain street widenings, to provide for vesting in the Council certain lammas lands as open spaces and recreation grounds; to make further provision for the improvement, health, and local government of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Lincolnshire and Yorkshire Electric Power Bill. "For incorporating and conferring powers on the Lincolnshire and Yorkshire Electric Power Company," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Littlestone-on-Sea and District Water Bill. "For incorporating the Littlestone-on-Sea and District Water Company and empowering them to construct works and supply water; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

London and India Docks Company Bill. "To facilitate the passage of traffic to and from the docks of the London and India Docks Company; to extend the time for the compulsory purchase of lands required for and for the completion of certain works; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

London and North Western Railway Bill. "For conferring further powers upon the London and North Western Railway Company in relation to their own undertaking, and upon that Company and the Great Western Railway Company in relation to their joint undertaking; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

London, Camberwell, and Dulwich Tramways Bill. "To define the widening of Rye Lane, Peckham, referred to in the Peckham and East Dulwich Tramways Act, 1885 and 1887; and to confer further powers upon the London, Camberwell, and Dulwich Tramways Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

London County Council (General Powers) Bill. "To empower the London County Council to acquire lands for various purposes; to make provisions with respect to sanitary and other like matters; to authorise the exchange of certain lands at Tooting Bec Common; to empower the Council of the Metropolitan Borough of Woolwich to purchase lands for various purposes; to change the name of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade; to confer various powers upon the London County Council and upon the Councils of Metropolitan Boroughs; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

London Port and Docks Bill. "To impose rates on goods imported into the Port of London, and to make provision for the improvement of the dock accommodation at, and the navigation of, the said Port; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill. "To confer further powers upon the London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Lytham Improvement Bill. "To authorise the Urban District Council of Lytham to acquire Land to erect a Town Hall, to make further provision in regard to their gas undertaking, and to the health, local government, improvement, and finance of their district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Midland Railway Bill. "To confer additional powers upon the Midland Railway Company and upon that Company and the Great Eastern Railway Company and upon the Midland and Great Northern Railways Joint Committee and the Norfolk and Suffolk Joint Committee, for the construction of works and acquisition of lands; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill. "To empower the Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Company to make a deviation railway in the county of Westmeath and an extension railway in the county of Louth, and to enable that Company and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company to enter into working and other agreements; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

North and South Woolwich Electric Railway Bill. "For incorporating the North and South Woolwich Electric Railway Company, and for empowering them to construct a railway from North Woolwich to South Woolwich, in the counties of London and Essex; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

North Staffordshire Railway Bill. "To confer further powers on the North Staffordshire Railway Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill. "For conferring further powers on the North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Norwich Water Bill. "To empower the City of Norwich Waterworks Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the

Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Plymouth and North Devon Direct Railway (Abandonment) Bill. "For the abandonment of the Plymouth and North Devon Direct Railway," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Plymouth Corporation Bill. "To confer further borrowing powers upon the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the borough of Plymouth," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Radcliffe Tramway and Improvement Bill. "To confer on the Urban District Council of Radcliffe further powers with regard to their tramways undertaking; to construct new tramways and street improvements; to extend the Town's Yard; and to make further provision in regard to the supply of electricity, and for the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Reading Corporation Bill. "To authorise an increase in the public libraries and museums' rates in the borough of Reading; to provide for the establishment of a superannuation fund; to make further provision in regard to the health, local government, and improvement of the said borough; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Bill. "For extending the limits of supply of the Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Ryde Gas Bill. "For conferring further powers upon the Ryde Gaslight Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Saddleworth and Springhead Tramways (Abandonment) Bill. "For the abandonment of the Saddleworth and Springhead Tramways; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

St. Marylebone Electric Lighting Bill. For conferring further powers upon the Mayor, Alderman, and Councillors of the metropolitan borough of St. Marylebone with regard to the supply of electricity; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time,

Selby Urban District Council Bill. "To enable the Urban District Council of Selby to construct new waterworks and to make further provision with regard to their market, water, and gas undertakings, to enable them to rate and acquire Selby Bridge, and for the improvement, health, and local government of the district," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Sheffield, Laughton, and Maltby Railway Bill. "For making railways in the West Riding of the county of York; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Sheppy Gas Bill. "For consolidating the capital of, and for conferring further powers on, the Sheppy Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Skipton Water and Improvement Bill. "To authorise the Urban District Council of Skipton to construct additional waterworks; to extend their limits of supply; and to make further provision with regard to the supply of electricity; and for the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Soothill Nether Urban District Tramways Bill. "To enable the Soothill Nether Urban District Council to make and maintain tramways and street improvements; to acquire land for the purpose of a refuse destructor; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Southend-on-Sea Gas Bill. "For conferring further powers on the Southend Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Southend Water Bill. "To empower the Southend Waterworks Company to raise further capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

South Shields Gas Bill. "To confer further powers upon the South Shields Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. "To extend the time limited for the compulsory purchase of lands for and completion of the railways and works authorised by the South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway Act, 1901; and for other purposes," presented and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill. "To empower the Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Company to construct railways in the Counties of Tyrone and Donegal; to change the name of the Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Surrey Commercial Dock Bill. "To authorise the Surrey Commercial Dock Company to raise further capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Sutton Gas Bill. "For conferring further powers upon the Sutton Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Swindon Corporation Bill. "To enable the Corporation of the Borough of Swindon to make new Tramways, and to make further provisions with reference to markets, and for the health, local government, and improvement of the borough; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Thames River Steamboat Service Bill. "To provide for the acquisition and construction of piers and landing places on the River Thames in the Administrative County of London by the London County Council, and to make provision for a service of vessels for passengers and parcels; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Thames Steamboat Trust Bill. "To incorporate trustees for the maintenance of a service of steamboats on the River Thames, to transfer to them the undertaking of the Thames Steamboat Company (1897), Limited, to provide for the transfer to them of certain piers on the River Thames, and for the guarantee by the London County Council of interest on moneys to be borrowed by the trustees; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Thurles Urban District Council Water Bill. "To authorise the Urban District Council of Thurles, in the County of Tipperary, to construct waterworks for the supply of the district; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Tottenham Improvement Bill. "To confer further powers upon the Urban District Council for the District of Tottenham in the County of Middlesex," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

Watford and District Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill. "To extend the time for the compulsory purchase of lands, and for the construction of the Tramways authorised by The Watford and District Tramways Act, 1901; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Wellington (Somerset) Gas Bill. "For incorporating and conferring powers on the Wellington (Somerset) Gas Company; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Whitby Gas Bill. "To confer further powers upon the Whitby Gas Company," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Wolverhampton Corporation Bill. "To empower the Corporation of Wolverhampton to construct tramways, and to make further provision in regard to their tramway, electricity, and market undertakings, and the health, local government, and improvement of their borough; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and ordered to be read a second time.

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of law: from Trelewis; Leeswood (two); Nerquis; Bryndu; Appledore; Gravesend; Radcliffe Close; Kirkconnel; Penpont; Eaglesfield; Frawsfynydd; Halifax (five); Rochester; Aberdeen; New York; Willesden; Evenwood; Northumberland; Ffynnon Greew; Cilcain; Tavistock; Ashton-under-Lyne; Honicknowle; Liverpool (five); Billy Row; Marske; Hutton; Exeter; Alexandria; Kirkintilloch; Kilpatrickin; Renton; Leven; Dalmuir; Thornhill; Peterborough; Hopkinstown; Hafod; Todmorden; Midgley; Porth; Kilbrandon; Thornley; Hull; Cilcain; Northwich; Thornhill; Whiteparish; York; Deal and Walmer; Barnstaple; Vriog and Fairbourne; Corwen; Blaenan; Millom; Blantyre; Tamworth; Egremont; Oxford; Sunderland; Driffield; Frodingham; Tarvin; Tarporley; Ramsbottom; Heywood; Aintree; Stockton; Lochee; St. Leonards; Lincoln (three); Swansea (four); Sydenham; Lee; Rehoboth; Rhiwlas; Llandynan; Bryn Eglwys (two); Llansannan; Nantyr; Hyfrydle; Conway; Colwyn Bay; Eirienallt; Henhan; Caistor; Scunthorpe; Brigg; North Kelsey; Carmarthen; Chasetown; Manley; Salford (three); South Cardigan; Penpark; Altrincham; Bucklow Hill; New Delaval; Thornton; Saffron Walden; Newquay; Queen's Dewsbury; Ore; Roche; Falmouth; Dalton in Furness; Chorley; Lytham; Stirling; Glasgow (two); Oban; Strachur; Bideford; Coombe Martin; Muddiford; Ilfracombe; Barnstaple; Appledore; Rowland's Castle; Warsash; Fareham; Hayling Island; Netley; Lynton; Congleton; Stokesley; Stockport (three); Pumpherston; Gainsboro'; Swanage; Bournemouth; Burslem; Bristol; Willenhall; Thornaby-on-Tees; East Greenwich; Willington Quay; Throckley; Gosforth; Whitehaven; Silver Stream Tent; Edinburgh (four); Royston; Shafton; Gainsborough; Chipping Norton; Dalry; Kilmaurs; Springside; Clevedon; Bristol; Barnsley (two); Rutherglen; Renfrew; Mapplewell; Worthing; Birstall; Wyke; Haverton Hill; St. Helens (four); Askam; Llangefni; Penygarned; Brynsiencyn; Llangoed; Lesmahagow; Strathaven; Leadhills; Stonehouse; Douglas Water; Douglas (two); Carluke; Boothtown; Bewdley; Batley; Rushden; Mickley Square; Law; Hexham; Corbridge; Ovington; Penrhyn Dendreeth; Trawsfynydd; Harlech; Llandrillo; Glannan Tryweryn; Llandanwg and Llanfair; Bala; Tent No. 2735 Independent Order of Rechabites; Maentwrog; Blaina Festiniog; Towyn Corris; Dolgelley (three); Arthog; Gwydelwern; Machynlleth; Cefnddwysam; Aberdovey; Chudleigh; Llandderfel; Carlin How; Kingsteignton; Teignmouth; Kingskerswell; Chagford; Newton Abbott; Brotton; Lustleigh; Shaldon; Heathfield; Madog; Beulah; Brynmair; Dartmouth; Choppington; Nomansland; Amesbury; Lanivet; Saltash; Wideawake Tent; Lostwithiel; Pelynt; Bodmin; Birmingham (two); Ferryden; Plymouth (two); Coseley; Bilston; Carlingcott; Radstock; Retford; Llannwchllyn; Derby; Redcar; Newcastle on Tyne; Penmacline; Aspatria; Glazert Bank; Keighley; and Denholme; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petitions for prohibition: from Plymouth; Bideford; and Barnstaple; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INEBRIATES ACTS, 1879 TO 1899 (REGULATIONS FOR STATE INEBRIATE REFORMATORIES).

Paper [presented 2nd February] to be printed. [No. 20.]

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND).

Return [presented 2nd February] to be printed. [No. 21.]

WAGES AND EFFECTS OF DECEASED SEAMEN.

Account [presented 2nd February] to be printed. [No. 22.]

EAST INDIA (SUGAR).

Return [presented 2nd February] to be printed. [No. 23.]

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Copy presented, of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the

Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during the nine months ending 30th September, 1903, together with Reports of the Inspecting Officers, Assistant Inspecting Officers, and Sub-Inspectors of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain Accidents which were inquired into [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ALIEN IMMIGRATION.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd February; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 24.]

TRADE AND NAVIGATION.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd February; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 25.]

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Copy presented, of an Order, entitled The Foreign Animals (Amendment) Order of 1903 (No. 3) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Copy presented, of an Order defining a foreign animals quarantine station at the port of Southampton [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).

Copy presented, of the Postal Order (Inland) Amendment Regulations, 1903, dated 14th September, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES FUND, 1902–3.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd February; *Mr. Victor Cavendish*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 26.]

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd February; *Mr. Victor Cavendish*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 27.]

NATIONAL GALLERY (REPORT).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd February; *Mr. Victor Cavendish*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 28.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNTS).

Appropriation Accounts presented, for the year ending 31st March, 1903, together with the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon and certain Reports upon Store Accounts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 29.]

ROYAL PARKS AND GARDENS.

Copy presented, of Provisional Rules for the Royal Parks and Gardens in connection with the Regulations prescribed by the Parks Regulation Act, 1872 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

HOLYROOD PARK.

Copy presented, of Rule for Holyrood Park in connection with the Regulations prescribed by the Parks Regulation Act, 1872 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of forty-seventh Detailed Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in Scotland (Abstracts of 1901) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE:—

1. Bank of England. Accounts of Exchequer Bills and other Government Securities purchased, and of the amount of Balances of Sums issued for the Payment of Dividends, &c., for the year ending the 5th January, 1904 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 30.]

2. Building Societies. Copy of Ninth Annual Report by the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies of the Proceedings of the Registrars under the Building Societies Acts, &c., [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 31.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Notices for Recovery of Income Tax in Scotland.

MR. M'CRAE (Edinburgh, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that notices for recovery of income tax within ten days have been issued in Scotland; whether this is in accordance with recent Treasury instructions; and whether similar notices have been issued in England.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The issue of the notices in question commenced, both in Scotland and England, on 22nd January, this date being in accordance with the instructions to which the hon. Member refers.

Issue of Transvaal Loan.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer how long the Government have agreed to postpone the issue of the first instalment of the new loan to the Transvaal Government which the late Colonial Secretary said on the 27th July last would be placed on the market probably in January, 1904; and whether the agreements as to underwriting will still hold good.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) It is not possible to say when the conditions of the money market will become favourable enough to ensure the successful issue of the loan. The postponement of the issue does not affect the agreement as to underwriting it.

Extinction of Debt.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he proposes to take for the paying off of debt during the current year, in view of the fact that the £10,000,000 due from the Transvaal under guarantee has not been paid.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I do not propose to take any step which will interfere with the Sinking Fund arrangements made last session.

Sudbury (Ontario) Nickel Mines.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to communications which have been received at the Colonial Office from Canadian official authorities regarding the future control of the nickel mines in the Sudbury District of Ontario; and, if so, will he say whether any replies, and if so, what, have been made to such communications; and whether His Majesty's Government proposes to take any steps to facilitate and control the use of this nickel for Imperial purposes.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The communications to which the hon. Member refers were duly forwarded to the Admiralty, and the inquiry should be addressed to the representative of that Department.

Amount of Unfunded Debt.

MR. BUCHANAN: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the present amount of the unfunded debt, specifying the amount of Treasury Bills and Exchequer Bonds outstanding, the rate of interest and period for which these securities have been renewed.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) There are £21,000,000 Exchequer Bonds outstanding, bearing 3 per cent. interest, of which £7,000,000 fall due next August, and the remainder in December, 1905. There are £21,133,000 Treasury Bills outstanding, of which £16,633,000 are twelve months' Bills bearing interest that varies from £3 4*s*. 4*d*. to £3 15*s*. 10*d*. per cent.; £4,000,000 are six months' Bills bearing interest that varies from £3 4*s*. 2*d*. to £3 15*s*. 10*d*. per cent., and £500,000 are three months Bills bearing interest at £4 2*s*. 3*d*. per cent. These Bills are exclusive of any Ways and Means Advances raised by Treasury Bills, which are necessarily paid off before the end of the financial year.

Release of Mrs. Maybrick.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether Mrs. Maybrick has been released from penal servitude; and, if so, on what conditions.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) Mrs. Maybrick has been granted a licence under the Penal Servitude Acts, and is at present in a home, which she will be allowed to leave towards the end of the summer. In accordance with the wishes of the authorities of the home, and with Mrs. Maybrick's own earnest desire, which is, I think, entitled to consideration, I do not propose to make public further details as to time or place.

Magistrates and Passive Resisters.

Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that in a number of instances benches of magistrates have directed that persons summoned for refusal to pay that portion of the rates which is applied to denominational schools should be placed in the prisoner's dock; and whether he will issue a circular or otherwise represent to magistrates that this course is illegal and should be discontinued.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) My attention has not been drawn to any case such as the hon. Member indicates. It is certainly not a usual practice to put persons summoned for non-payment of rates in the dock, and except in very special circumstances I do not think it would be right to do so. But no question of law is involved, nor have I any authority to issue instructions to magistrates in the matter.

Beer Poisoning—Standard of Purity.

Sir CUTHBERT QUILTER (Suffolk, Sudbury): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the confirmation by the Royal Commission on Arsenical Poisoning of the opinions expressed in the Minority Report of the Beer Materials Committee issued five years ago, prior to the outbreak of the beer poisoning epidemic, that legislation or other provision was necessary to prevent the use of deleterious substances in the manufacture of beer, and that a court of reference, as recommended by the Committee on the adulteration of food products (a recommendation since endorsed also by the Food Preservatives Committee), should be established for fixing standards of purity for the purposes of the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts; and, if so, will he say what action it is proposed to take to give effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission, more especially as regards the protection of the public against the use of injurious ingredients in beer, and the fixing of a standard of purity.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I had, before the issue of the Report of the Royal Commission on Arsenical Poisoning, had under consideration the expediency of promoting legislation with a view to the constitution of a court of reference for the decision of certain scientific questions in relation to food of the kind referred to in the Question, and I had been in communication with the Board of Trade and the Board of Agriculture on the subject. I am continuing to give attention to the matter, but having regard to the large and important recommendations of the Arsenical Commission, I think it will be necessary that a conference should be held of representatives of the Government Departments concerned before a decision as to the course to be adopted can be arrived at.

Employment in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if, with the object of testing the assertions recently made that employment, in the aggregate, has fallen off in the United Kingdom and Ireland, he would have a Return made from the census tables of 1881, 1891, and 1901, giving, under a few general heads, the total number employed, including all in Government or municipal service, together with the total population of each period, and the percentage the employed bear to the population of each period.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Census Returns do not give the numbers of the population that are employed or unemployed at the date of each census, but only show the occupation usually followed by each individual when employed. I regret, therefore, that it is not in my power to cause the Return desired by my noble friend to be compiled.

Causes and Effects of Tariff Wars on the Continent.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will lay upon the Table of the House the information recently received from His Majesty's Representatives and the Consular service abroad, relating to the causes and effects of the tariff wars between France and Italy, France and Switzerland, and Germany and Russia.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The Reports received on this subject will be laid upon the Table and distributed in a few days.

Alleged Atrocities on the Congo.

Mr. CHANNING: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any official or other confirmation has been received of the statements recently made by the Rev. T. H. Weeks, Baptist Missionary, in the *West African Mail*, writing from the Monsembe Station on the Congo, to the effect that a number of men, women, and children have been killed in villages in that district for failure to pay their taxes; and, if not, whether inquiry will be directed into these allegations.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) This subject is dealt with in the Report from His Majesty's Consul for the Congo which is shortly to be laid before Parliament.

Preferential Tariffs—Views of Indian Government.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: To ask the Secretary of State for India if any reply has been received by the India Office from the Government of India in response to a telegram sent on 7th August, 1903, by the then Secretary of State asking for the views of the Indian Government upon the subject of preferential tariffs; and, if so, would he lay it upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) I have received the reply of the Government of India, and I will lay the Papers on the Table of the House.

Crown Law Officers—Salaries and Fees.

Mr. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state what were the total amounts, including salaries and fees, paid to the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General respectively for the year ending 31st March, 1903; also, for the same period, the amounts paid as salaries for the department of King's Proctor, Solicitor, and Director of Public Prosecutions.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The following amounts were paid to the Law Officers respectively for the year ending 31st March, 1903, viz.:—

	Salary.	Fees.	Total.
	£	£	£
Attorney-General	7,000	4,816	11,816
Solicitor-General	6,000	3,701	9,701

The salaries for the department of King's Proctor, Solicitor, and Director of Public Prosecutions for the same period (exclusive of payments for copying work) amounted to £21,912. The office of King's Proctor is at present held by the Solicitor to the Treasury and Director of Public Prosecutions, but it is altogether a separate office, and Lord Desart receives under existing arrangements no salary for performance of the duties of that office.

Exeter Education Authority — Removal of Children from One School to Another.

Mr. H. C. RICHARDS (Finsbury, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if his attention has been called, or the consent of the Department given, to the notice recently issued in the city and county of Exeter by the education authority to the effect that no child be allowed to be removed from either of the elementary schools under the control of the education authority to another unless the consent of the authority be first obtained; if so, will he state upon what authority this notice was issued; and what steps he proposes to take to prevent the issue of similar circulars.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) My attention has only this morning been called to the notice referred to, a copy of which reached the Board of Education yesterday. The notice would appear to be designed simply to meet the difficulty caused by capricious and frequent removals of a child from school to school. I will communicate with the local authority in question as to the methods proposed to be adopted for attaining the end in view. The Board hold that as a general rule it should rest with a parent to decide which school his child shall attend, and any complaint by a parent as to undue restriction of this freedom would receive the careful consideration of the Board.

Operation of Labourers Acts in Ireland.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of promised legislation in connection with Irish labourers, he will, for the information of the House, issue as a Parliamentary Paper the reports which he has received from the Local Government inspectors on the operation of the existing Acts and the direction in which they think new legislation may be most advantageously applied.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The reports furnished by these inspectors are confidential documents, and as such it would not be in accordance with practice or precedent to publish them.

Strength of Volunteer Force.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is the present strength of the Volunteer Force, and how it compares with the state of affairs on 1st February, 1901; and what is the present deficiency in officers.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) As regards the totals of all ranks, the returns being rendered quarterly, the latest figures available are for 1st January of each year, and are as follows:—1901, Strength 277,910; 1904, Strength 241,280. As regards the officers the present establishment is 9,454, and the deficiency on the 1st February was 2,333; this includes 184 seconded or supernumerary officers.

War Office Reorganisation Committee—Circulation of Report.

MAJOR EVANS-GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Interim Report of the Committee on War Office Reorganisation, which was supplied to the Press on Monday, will be laid upon the Table and circulated to Members.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) This Report will be laid upon the Table and circulated to Members.

Transport of Government Stores to Gibraltar and Malta.

MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he will state the nature of the shipping contracts for the transport of Government stores to Gibraltar, the name of the shipping company employed, the freight charged, whether tenders are invited from various shipping companies; and whether, in view of the amount of consignment of stores to Gibraltar and Malta, the Department contemplates employing special Government vessels for this purpose.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The contract for the conveyance of Army and Navy stores to Gibraltar is in the hands of Messrs. J. Hall, Junior, and Company. It is terminable at a month's notice, and the Government reserve the right to convey stores also in His Majesty's ships, hired transports, mail packets, or vessels wholly chartered for the purpose. Competitive tenders were last obtained in 1894, when Messrs. Hall again secured the contract, the terms of which have, however, been revised from time to time to meet Government requirements. It is not usual to publish the rates paid under Government contracts unless special reasons exist for doing so. It is not considered desirable to employ special Government vessels for conveying stores to Gibraltar, as such a course would involve the collection of full cargoes, and would thus cause great practical difficulties. It would, moreover, be a very expensive course to adopt, as, owing to the small amounts of stores consigned home, the vessels would return practically empty.

Condition of Malta.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table the Papers relative to the condition of Malta which have been received since the issue of the last Blue-book.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) No Papers of importance have been received since the issue of the Blue-book in July last, and it is not proposed to lay any further Papers at present.

Colonial Civil Servants and Political Demonstrations.

DR. SHIPMAN (Northampton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the fact that under the civil service regulations of most colonies, officers of their Governments are forbidden to participate in any proceedings of a political character, he will consider the advisability of making representations to the Ministries of self-governing colonies as to the impropriety of their Agents-General actively participating in British politics, or becoming members of an avowedly political organisation in this country.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) As the Agents-General for the Colonies under responsible government are entirely under the control of the Colonial Ministers who appoint them, the matter is one for the Colonial Governments to consider, and I should not be disposed to interfere.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Aalesund Disaster.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that a shipment of about 500 tons of clothing and food, &c., were prepared for despatch from the Deptford Victualling Yard to the inhabitants of the town of Aalesund on the 25th of last month; and that H.M.S. "Hearty" has been lying idle outside the yard since that date, he will state the cause of the delay.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The fact of the Aalesund disaster became known at the Admiralty on Monday morning, January 25th, and a telegraphic inquiry was at once sent to the Norwegian Government, through His Majesty's Minister at Stockholm, asking whether it would be of use to send one of His Majesty's ships with blankets and provisions. His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General at Christiania telegraphed on the 26th to say that the Norwegian Government was making inquiries as to whether help was required, and later on the same day again telegraphed requesting on behalf of the Norwegian Government that acceptance of the offer mighr be postponed till it could be seen whethet the local authorities could cope with the situation with the assistance already supplied. In the meantime orders had been given for stores to be held in readiness at His Majesty's Victualling Yard, Deptford, and a vessel of war was detailed to embark them. She arrived off Deptford on the 27th, and is still there awaiting the decision of the Norwegian Government.

Officers' War Gratuities.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state why the gratuities to officers specially taken into employment during the South African War, as laid down in the Royal Pay Warrant, paragraph 601B, have not yet been paid, and when they are likely to be paid.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): I am afraid that the hon. and gallant Member is under some misapprehension. These gratuities have been paid as they became due. In some cases, however, they have been altogether withheld owing to the unsatisfactory nature of the service of the officers concerned; and in a few cases they have been held back where the officers' accounts were not satisfactorily rendered.

CAPTAIN NORTON: If I give the big cases in which they have not been paid will he inquire into them.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes.

Officers' Saddlery.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his intention has been called to paragraph (c), page 6, Report on the Officers' Expenses, recommending that military saddlery shall be issued to all officers of mounted corps; and, if so, whether he will explain why the Department has declined to carry out this recommendation, in view of the time that has elapsed since the Committee reported.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The issue of saddlery to mounted officers was authorised by Army Order 4 of January, 1904. It was not considered expedient to publish any decision to this effect until sufficient stock had been obtained to enable an issue to be made.

SIR CARNE RASCH: Does the Order not apply to the Indian Government, which has refused to supply saddlery to officers?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It does not apply.

The 2nd Essex Regiment.

SIR CARNE RASCH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, seeing that the 2nd Essex is under orders for the Mediterranean, that they came home in 1902 after twenty years continuous foreign service, and have only had sixteen months at home, he will arrange that battalions which have had ten years home service previous to the South African War shall go out before the Essex.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Owing to the present exigencies of the service more than half of the battalions of the line are required abroad, and it has accordingly been found necessary to curtail the period of home service. The claims of the various battalions who have been selected to proceed abroad have been most carefully weighed, and I am afraid that it is impossible to amend the selection without unfairness to others.

British Made Pom-Poms Sold to the Boers.

MR. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the number of pom-poms supplied to the Boers by English manufacturers, and the dates prior to the war at which these guns were supplied.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The number of pom-poms of British manufacture supplied to the Boers before the war was twenty-two. I am not in a position to state the exact dates at which these guns were supplied.

Quick-Firing Guns for the Army.

MR. FREDERICK WILSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the number of quick-firing guns which have been purchased by the War Department in Germany, and whether any pattern of quick-firing gun has yet been decided on at our Government factories.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The number of quick-firing guns purchased in Germany was 108. As regards the new quick-firing gun no pattern has as yet been approved. It is hoped that a large number of the new pattern quick-firing guns will be manufactured during the next financial year.

Aldershot Sham Fight—Use of Ball Cartridge.

MR. FYLER (Surrey, Chertsey): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to a sham fight in the vicinity of Aldershot, on 18th December last, in which a private soldier was injured by one of several ball cartridges that were fired, and during which continued firing took place on the public roads at Camberley; and, if so, will he say whether this was in acccordance with War Office regulations; whether an inquiry has been held into the occurrence; and whether steps can be taken to prevent the recurrence of this inconvenience to residents in the district.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: My attention has been drawn to this case. The matter was referred to the general officer commanding, who stated that the circumstances as reported were greatly exaggerated, that he had already dealt with the case and had taken such steps as were possible to prevent any recurrence. The regulations in regard to firing on public roads are as follow:—"Firing on a public road will not, as a rule, be permitted; but when a road is unoccupied by the public, with no horses or carriages near, a single shot may be fired to mark the position."

India—Official Secrets Bill.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has received from India a reply to the memorial against the Official Secrets Bill presented to the Secretary of State on the 12th of November last; and whether, in view of the objection taken to the Bill by Indians and Anglo-Indians, he is in a position to state that its provisions will be confined to the case of Naval and Military secrets.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): I forwarded to the Government of India the memorial to which the hon. Member refers, but I have not received a reply. The Bill is now under consideration by a Select Committee, and if it is passed by the Legislative Council will be reported to me in due course with all the debates and discussions. I can meantime give no pledge that its provisions will be confined to Naval and Military secrets.

The Mission to Thibet.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will make a statement setting forth the objects and reasons for the present expedition to Thibet; whether he can give an assurance to the House that there is no intention of annexing any portion of Thibetan territory; whether he will state the strength of the military force employed, and the estimated cost of the expedition; whether the whole of the expense will be borne by the Imperial Treasury; and whether he will lay Papers upon the Table of the House.

*Mr. BRODRICK: A full statement of the reasons for and objects of the political mission to Thibet is contained in the Blue-book which will shortly be in the hands of hon. Members. The object of the mission is not to annex any portion of Thibetan territory, but to prevent a recurrence of the difficulties arising from the attitude of the Thibetan Government in respect of the Convention of 1890. The force employed, as I stated in my reply to the hon. Member for King's Lynn yesterday, is some 3,000 men. A preliminary estimate of the expenditure for four months from the 1st November is £108,400, but owing to difficulties of transport this will probably be exceeded. The charge will be borne by Indian revenues.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS: Arising out of that, may I ask whether it is likely that the Blue-book will be issued before the debate on the Amendment to the Address dealing with the mission.

*Mr. BRODRICK: I hope the Blue-book will be ready by Monday or Tuesday. I am doing all in my power to expedite its issue.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what is the nature of the expedition sent from India to, and now in, Thibet; what is the total number of men composing it; has the Government of Thibet given permission for the expedition to enter the country; have any military operations been undertaken by this expedition; why was the expedition ordered and what end is it intended to attain; and will Papers be laid showing the causes which led to the despatch of the expedition.

*Mr. BRODRICK: A political mission has been sent to Thibet with an escort to provide for its safety. The escort consists of 400 men, with a seven-pounder gun and a machine gun, and a supporting force has been placed at various points to preserve the communications of the mission. The total of the troops employed on the escort and on the communications, according to my present information, is about 3,000 men. The mission has been sent in consequence of the failure of the Thibetan Government to carry out its obligations under the Treaty of 1890, and the neglect of the Thibetan Government to meet the British representatives as arranged by the Chinese Government, who are the Suzerain Power. No military operations have been undertaken. Papers will shortly be laid showing the circumstances which have made the despatch of a mission necessary.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: That is no answer to my Question whether the Thibetan Government have given permission for this expedition to enter their territory.

*Mr. BRODRICK: The Chinese Government, who entered into these negotiations in the first instance, arranged for a meeting of the representatives of the Thibetan, Chinese, and Indian Governments in Thibetan territory. The Government of Thibet have hitherto failed to comply with the arrangement made by the Chinese Government, and therefore they have not given permission to the mission to enter their territory.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say exactly where the mission now is, and whether the members are suffering from the inclement weather?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! Notice must be given of that Question.

Tibetan Expedition.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether communications passed between His Majesty's Government and the Russian Government regarding the expedition to Thibet before it was despatched, if so, will he state their purport; and can he lay the correspondence upon the Table.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (EARL PERCY, Kensington, S.): The answer to the first Question is in the affirmative, the Papers are included in the correspondence which will shortly be laid.

Chinese Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies when he will be in a position to lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the Labour (Importation of Asiatics) Ordinance (or any Paper relating thereto) recently passed through the Transvaal Legislative Council; and whether he will undertake that the Government will not finally decide the question of the allowance or disallowance of the Ordinance until after the House has had an opportunity of discussing and deciding the question on its merits. May I point out that the Government have already promised to give an opportunity for a full discussion of this question.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): At the same time may I ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, before arriving at any decision upon the Ordinance permitting the importation of Chinese into South Africa, which is now being considered by the Legislative Council at Pretoria, he will, in case that Ordinance should be passed in the Council, cause the text of the Ordinance to be laid before this House, and arrange that this House shall have an opportunity of fully discussing it. I also wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will cause to be presented to Parliament the evidence taken before the Commission which recently sat in the Transvaal to examine into the question of labour for the mines. It is of extreme importance that we should have this.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): The Papers which were published yesterday contain a draft of the Asiatic Labour Ordinance as introduced in the Legislative Council of the Transvaal, and a telegraphic report of the Amendments made in Committee. These Papers will afford the hon. Member the means of examining the details of the proposed legislation; and I am taking steps to obtain, at the earliest possible moment, the official text of the Ordinance as actually passed, which will be published as soon as it is received. In reply to the second part of the hon. Member's Question, I have announced, in answer to an inquiry addressed to me, that His Majesty's Government will defer giving their final sanction to the Ordinance for the introduction of Asiatic labour into the Transvaal until Parliament has had an opportunity for full discussion of the subject. This announcement, which was made with the concurrence and approval of the Prime Minister, was in consequence of, and was designed to meet, a request of the Leader of the Opposition to the effect that, inasmuch as debate was sure to take place on this subject on the Address, this legislation should not be an accomplished fact before the meeting of Parliament. In order to carry out the pledge which was thus given, I have instructed Lord Milner to introduce into the Ordinance a clause suspending the operation of the Ordinance pending further instructions. I have to point out, however, that, as is evident from the Blue-book, the question is one of great urgency, and His Majesty's Government cannot undertake to postpone their decision longer than the termination of the debate on the Address. A Question has been asked me with reference to the publication of the evidence. I have to say that the evidence is now in the printer's hands and will be laid on the Table of the House. I anticipate that we shall be able to place advance copies of the evidence in the library either on Saturday or Monday next.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): When will the House see the actual words of the Ordinance as finally passed.

MR. LYTTELTON: I cannot definitely say as to a day. Hon. Members have already in the Blue-book the amended Ordinance, and they have further Amendments which have been introduced and which will be placed in the Blue-book. Hon. Members have, therefore, the opportunity of consulting the full Ordinance as we believe it has passed; but by Saturday or Monday my hon. friend will certainly have the official text of the document.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I thank the right hon. Gentleman for his evident desire to meet the wishes of the House; but those who are interested in this subject are anxious, before the House proceeds to discuss, consider, and pronounce an opinion on this matter, that they shall be in possession of the whole of the materials. It is quite obvious that the actual evidence given before the Commissioners is an essential part of the case. I think perhaps the most convenient way will be to hang the matter up until we get the evidence and the other documents required. I think the right hon. Gentleman will also see that, after we have these materials actually placed in our hands, hon. Members must have a little time to master and understand the situation before them.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the promises on behalf of the Government that Chinese labour should not be introduced into the Transvaal against the wishes of the population, he can see his way, either by means of the referendum or some other plan, to obtain the opinion of the people before giving his sanction to the Ordinance which the Transvaal Government have approved.

MR. LYTTELTON: In view of the vote and debate in the Legislative Council and of the other evidence contained in the Blue-book, on which Lord Milner's advice to His Majesty's Government has been based, His Majesty's Government are of opinion that the introduction of Asiatic labour is in conformity with the wishes of the people of the Transvaal. They are not able to agree that the expedient of a referendum should be adopted.

The Transvaal Loan.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there are any official documents explaining the arrangement which was entered into between the late Secretary of State for the Colonies and certain capitalists regarding the pledge of the latter to subscribe £10,000,000 sterling of the issue of a Transvaal loan of £30,000,000, one third of which was to be issued during the present month; and, if so, whether he will lay them upon the Table.

MR. LYTTELTON: I have to refer the hon. Member to the Blue-book published yesterday.

Native Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of the Foreign Office has been drawn to the statement, quoted in paragraph 66 of the Majority Report of the Transvaal Labour Commission, to the effect that the natives of the British Central Protectorate, imported into the Transvaal to work in the mines, have proved very unsatisfactory as labourers, and have been dying of pneumonia at a rate which is equal to a rate of 28 per cent. per annum; whether this mortality still continues; and whether the

Foreign Secretary will prohibit the recruitment of other labourers in British Central Africa, and will arrange for the repatriation of the survivors.

*Earl PERCY: We are aware of the statement alluded to. The Question has formed the subject of personal investigation by Lord Milner since his return to South Africa. His report shows that of the deaths which had occurred up to December 31st amongst the British Central African natives in the mines, a large proportion was due to an epidemic of influenza which broke out at the time of their arrival. The tenor of his report and of others previously received is not such as in the opinion of the Secretary of State would justify him in altogether prohibiting further recruiting under adequate safeguards, and this opinion has been confirmed by the evidence of the Protectorate Officer who accompanied the last recruits. Some of the earlier emigrants have already returned to the Protectorate. The rest will return at the expiration of their year's contract.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): Will papers on this subject be laid on the Table of the House immediately?

Earl PERCY'S answer was inaudible.

Congo Free State Administration.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when Mr. Casement's Report on the Administration of the Congo Free State will be presented to Parliament, and whether the correspondence between His Majesty's Government and the Governments of other Powers relative to the Congo Free State will be published at an early date.

*Earl PERCY: Mr. Casement's Report on the Administration of the Congo State will be presented to Parliament at an early date, together with certain other correspondence on the same subject.

Macedonia.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has any information been received by the Government as to the intention of the Governments of Servia and Bulgaria shortly to join with the Macedonian insurgents in hostilities against Turkey, and have His Majesty's Government taken any steps to secure the execution of the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin by the creation of autonomous provinces in the Balkans under the suzerainty of the Sultan, or in any other manner to secure the maintenance of peace in European Turkey.

*Earl PERCY: His Majesty's Government have received no information of the nature indicated in the first paragraph of the Question. The steps taken by His Majesty's Government with a view of securing the maintenance of peace in European Turkey are fully described in the Papers which have just been presented to the House. They have devoted their efforts to supporting and strengthening the schemes of reform advanced by the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Governments, and urging that those reforms should be promptly put into execution.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Have the Government considered the propriety of calling a conference of European Powers on the subject?

*Earl PERCY: I must ask for notice of that Question.

The Far East—Russia and Manchuria.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can make any statement to the House in regard to the situation in the Far East; and whether, with the view of averting war between our Japanese allies and Russia, any joint or separate representations have been made by His Majesty's Government and the Government of the United States of America to the Russian Government pressing for the prompt evacuation of Manchuria, in accordance with their repeated assurances.

*Earl PERCY: Having regard to the present state of the negotiations between Russia and Japan it would obviously be improper that I should offer any observations to the House upon this subject. Frequent representations have been made to the Russian Government by His Majesty's Government with regard to the delay in the evacuation of Manchuria.

Niu-chwang Customs Staff.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the native customs at Niu-chwang, which under the protocol to which Russia was a signatory are to be administered by the Maritime Customs, have been removed by Admiral Alexieff from the control of Sir Robert Hart by the dismissal of the Russian in charge who was appointed by Sir Robert Hart, and the appointment instead of a Russian Government official from Dalny; and, if so, what steps His Majesty's Government are taking with a view of securing the due observance of the provisions of the protocol.

*Earl PERCY: We have heard that the Russians have removed the member of the Maritime Customs staff from the administration of the native customs at Niu-chwang and replaced him by a nominee of their own. Representations have been made to the Russian Government.

Chinese Labour in the Chincha Islands.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, seeing that an agreement was entered into some years ago between the Chinese Government, or certain Chinese agents with the permission of that Government, and the Government of Peru, or certain persons connected with the guano deposits in the Chincha Islands, to export to these islands Chinese indentured labourers to work on the guano deposits, and that this trade was eventually forbidden by the Chinese Government owing to representations made by Her Majesty's Government, he will lay upon the Table of the House all documents in connection with this matter, together with any Reports of His Majesty's representatives in Peru in regard to the fate of the indentured Chinese labourers who reached the Chincha Islands.

*Earl PERCY: Full particulars of the matter referred to will be found in the "Correspondence upon the subject of Emigration from China" presented to the House of Commons in pursuance of their address of April 30th, 1855.

Extinction of Debt.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he proposes to take for the paying off of debt during the current year, in view of the fact that the £10,000,000 due from the Transvaal under guarantee has not been paid.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not propose to take any steps which will interfere with the Sinking Fund arrangements made last session.

Mr. BUCHANAN: Are we to understand that no attempt will be made by the Government to make a special effort to reduce the Debt during the current year?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Gentleman is to understand that the arrangements made by my predecessors last year and the year before are to remain in force. I must decline to make any further statement on the subject until the time comes for dealing with the Budget for the coming year.

Mr. BUCHANAN: Did not the right hon. Gentleman's predecessors state that the particular way in which they intended to reduce the war debt was by the employment of this sum of £10,000,000 from the Transvaal?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir; that is not an accurate recollection of the statements of my predecessors. They did intend to employ the money which they expected to recover in this way in further reduction of the Debt; but they restored the Sinking Fund and increased it quite apart from this contribution from the Transvaal.

Sir JOHN GORST: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether his predecessor did not inform the House that this £10,000,000 would be repaid within the financial year?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have not the words of my predecessor before me. But he did anticipate that the loan would be raised in the early part of this year. This is no longer possible.

Income Tax.

*Mr. M'CRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that notices for recovery of income tax within ten days have been issued in Scotland; whether this is in accordance with recent Treasury instructions; and whether similar notices have been issued in England.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The issue of the notices in question commenced, both in Scotland and England, on 22nd January, this date being in accordance with the instructions to which the hon. Member refers.

*Mr. M'CRAE: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether ten day notices have been sent out in England?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have said they commenced sending them out at the same date in both countries.

British Trade Statistics.

Mr. HENRY HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps he proposes to take to supplement and complete the Memoranda on British Trade [Cd. 1761], which are stated in the prefatory note to be incomplete, fragmentary, and hastily prepared.

*The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): Inquiries are continually in progress by the Commercial, Labour, and Statistical Departments of the Board of Trade with a view to supplement and complete the information contained in the Blue-book referred to. The question of publication of some of the material thus collected in a suitable form will be considered at a later stage.

Mr. HENRY HOBHOUSE: Can the right hon. Gentleman say about when the information will be published?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not prepared to say.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether His Majesty's Government will lay upon the Table the questions and inquiries addressed to the Board of Trade, in response to which the Memoranda, Statistical Tables, and Charts [Cd. 1761] 1903, were prepared with reference to various matters bearing on British and foreign trade and industrial conditions.

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir. These questions and inquiries were confidential, and I am not prepared to lay them on the Table.

Merchandise Marks Act—Pearson's Christmas Extra.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that a publication called Pearson's Christmas Extra, issued at the close of last year, was partially printed in Holland, and that no intimation of this fact was printed thereon as required by the Merchandise Marks Act; and whether he proposes to take any action against the publishers, as provided for under such circumstances by the said Act.

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: The attention of the Board of Trade has been informally drawn to this case, and the informant has been told that the procedure of the Board of Trade in such matters is governed by the regulations made under Section 2 of the Merchandise Marks Act, 1891. Any complaint made to the Board in accordance with these regulations will, of course, receive their careful consideration.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: If I call attention to it in my individual capacity as a humble taxpayer——

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: It must be done in the proper form.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Will the Board of Trade prosecute?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: It is impossible to answer that until the application is considered.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: How can I lay it before the Board of Trade?

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I shall be happy to forward a copy of the regulations to the hon. Gentleman.

Historical Manuscripts Commission.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state what steps are being taken by the Historical Manuscripts Commission with a view to the publication of the manuscripts of the Irish Franciscans.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.): I regret to learn from the Historical Manuscripts Commissioners that the gentleman engaged by them to transcribe the manuscripts has, owing to ill-health and other causes, not made very rapid progress. He has now been relieved of his duties; and a new Inspector will proceed to Dublin next week to press the work to completion.

Island of Lewis.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state when he proposes to deal with the recommendations contained in the Report on the Social Condition of the Island of Lewis.

*The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire): The Report to which the hon. Member refers contains many recommendations of value, to which I am giving careful consideration. I have consulted the several Boards through whom action must be taken, and I am in correspondence with the convener of the Committee. I should like to add that many of the more important recommendations cannot be accepted unless the Bill which I am about to introduce to amend the Congested Districts Act of 1897 should receive the sanction of Parliament.

Scottish Board of Manufactures.

Sir J. STIRLING-MAXWELL (Glasgow College): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he will state what action he proposes to take during the present session on the Report of the Committee on the Board of Manufactures.

*Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am glad to be able to inform the hon. Member that the Treasury are able to give immediate effect to part of the recommendations in the Report, as will be seen in the Estimates. There are, however, questions of great complexity and magnitude raised by the Report to which I am giving my careful consideration, but on which it would be obviously premature to attempt to give any statement as to the course of action to be followed.

Sir J. STIRLING-MAXWELL: Has my right hon. friend anything to say with regard to the constitution of the Board itself?

*Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: No, Sir, and I think that is obviously a Question which I ought not to be asked to answer at present.

Irish Labourers Acts—Mullingar Rural District Council.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Mullingar Rural District Council have passed a resolution protesting against the award of the arbitrator appointed under the Labourers Acts in the Mullingar rural district; and that the amounts allowed landlords for their interest in the plots of land proposed to be taken under the scheme now in course of promotion, are greatly in excess of those hitherto allowed; and, if so, whether he can state the reason for the increase; and whether, seeing that the arbitrator is a professional land agent, he will say whether it is usual to appoint land agents to such a position involving the fixing of the amount to be paid for the interest of a landlord in land; and whether he will state the average number of years purchase awarded in the last award in this rural district and similar averages in the previous awards in the same district, also the number of arbitrations of this class in which this gentleman had been previously engaged.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The arbitrator who made the award of which the District Council complains is the Official Land Commission Valuer for County Leitrim. The Local Government Board has every confidence in his impartiality. The Board does not consider that the holding of a land agency should of itself disqualify a person from appointment as arbitrator when the Board is otherwise satisfied as to his qualifications and impartiality. In the present award the compensation averages £23 an acre. In the previous award it represented £20 an acre. The present arbitrator was employed in one previous case in Longford, when no complaint was made.

MR. HAYDEN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say the number of years purchase.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have not that.

Irish Landowners' Convention and the Land Purchase Act.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to a statement at a meeting of the Cork branch of the Irish Landowners' Convention, held in Cork on Saturday last, by the chairman, to the effect that the provisions of The Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1903, did not permit trustees to invest in 4 per cent. securities; and, if so, whether he will consider the advisability of introducing, if necessary, legislation to make clear the provisions of the Act relating to the investment of trust funds.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Under the provisions of Section 51 of the Act of 1903, trustees are empowered to invest in a large number of securities yielding 4 per cent. at par. Many of these are at a premium, and consequently do not yield that rate of interest, but there are a number which can be purchased to pay 4 per cent.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: May I ask if I am to understand the right hon. Gentleman to mean that the statement in the Question is inaccurate?

*MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir, that would be so.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Then will the right hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of furnishing the Irish Landowners' Convention with a copy of the Act, to enable them to study it?

[No answer was returned.]

Wicklow Magistracy.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of Protestants who have been appointed to the Commission of the Peace for the county of Wicklow since the 1st July, 1895, and the number of Roman Catholics who have been appointed magistrates for the same county and during the same period; and, also, the total number of Protestants and Roman Catholics who at the present time hold the Commission of the Peace for the said county of Wicklow.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The numbers referred to in the first paragraph are 36 and 3; and in the second paragraph 106 and 22.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: Does the right hon. Gentleman consider that an equal division?

[No answer was returned.]

Evicted Tenants.

MR. J .P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many applications from evicted tenants for restoration to their holdings have been received under the Land Purchase Act of 1903 by the Estate Commissioners; and whether the Commissioners, with a view to restore these tenants to their own or equivalent holdings, have yet made any overtures or inquiries as to the purchase of untenanted lands in county Longford.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Fifty-one such applications have been received from the county Longford. No untenanted lands in the county have yet been offered for sale to the Commissioners.

Granard Union—Workhouse Master.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the removal for neglect of duty of Mr. Leamy from the office of master of Granard Union Workhouse, to which position he had been appointed by the Local Government Board against the wishes of the local guardians, who favoured and requested the old master, Mr. O'Beirne, to be retained in the office; and whether he will, in order to restore peace in Granard Union, now direct the reappointment of Mr. O'Beirne to the office from which he was removed.

* Mr. WYNDHAM: Mr. Leamy has been required to resign on account of his failure to report a serious breach of discipline in the Workhouse. The former master is not eligible for re-election. The guardians propose to give him a superannuation allowance on the ground that he is permanently incapacitated by ill-health from the discharge of the duties of master.

In reply to a further question,

* Mr. WYNDHAM said he understood that this very regrettable dispute was approaching a satisfactory termination.

Coolegreaney Estate.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can give the House any information regarding the settlement of the Coolegreaney Estate in county Wexford.

* Mr. WYNDHAM: Negotiations for the sale of this estate have not yet been closed; they will, it is expected, be very shortly completed. When this desirable end is reached the Estates Commissioners will be in a position to restore immediately some twenty evicted tenants to their former holdings. For others of this class land will be sought elsewhere. The landlord himself restored twenty-five evicted tenants before negotiating with the Commissioners.

Forestry in Ireland.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Government propose to take any steps towards the development of forestry in Ireland.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Department of Agriculture has had under consideration for some time the question of assisting the development of forestry in Ireland. Investigations are still in progress, and the Department is not at present in a position to say definitely what measures it may recommend should be adopted.

*Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a large number of county councils in Ireland are most anxious to co-operate in this direction?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I am very glad to hear it.

The Wreck of the "Albert."

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will communicate with the proper authorities with a view to the removal of the wreck of the "Albert," off Curracloe, county Wexford, which is an impediment to the fishing industry in the locality.

Mr. WYNDHAM: My attention has not previously been drawn to this matter. I am making inquiry and will communicate the result to the hon. Baronet.

Seed Potatoes for Small Occupiers in Ireland.

Mr. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to resolutions passed by the Castlerea Rural District Council pointing out the necessity of supplying seed potatoes to the occupiers of small agricultural holdings in the district, owing to the almost total failure of the crop in the last season, the bad quality of the available seed, and the advisability of a change of seed; and whether he is in a position to make any statement as to the intention of the Irish Government on this subject.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The resolutions have been received. In respect to the second part of the Question I would refer to my † reply to the similar Question addressed to me yesterday by the hon. Member for North Roscommon.

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† *See* page 192.

Drogheda Disturbances.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to an attack made upon the private residence of a Mr. Pearson, Palace Street, Drogheda, on the 22nd and 24th of January last, and to the fact that stones were thrown at the house and doors smashed; and, if so, if he can say what action has been taken in the matter.

Mr. WYNDHAM: No attack was made on this gentleman's house on the dates mentioned. But on the 14th January some stones are alleged to have been thrown at the house. The police are pursuing their investigations in the matter.

Mr. SLOAN: Is Mr. Pearson under police protection?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I must ask for notice of that.

Labourers' Cottages in Ireland.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will grant the Return standing on to-day's Notice Paper relating to labourers' cottages in Ireland.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I have communicated with the hon. Member on the subject of the proposed Return.

The Return is as follows:—

Return showing the number of Cottages applied for in every Poor Law Union in Ireland under the latest completed scheme in connection with the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, together with the number of applications for extra half acres to cottages already built under the Acts under said scheme; how many of these applications for cottages and extra half acres were sanctioned; the amount of expenses connected with such scheme; and in what way applied.

Irish Town Tenants.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government will consider the advisability of introducing a Bill to safeguard the town tenants of Ireland in their holdings at reasonable rents, and to prevent the loss of their improvements under the terminable leasehold system.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Government cannot hold out any hope of introducing legislation in the direction suggested in the Question.

Longford Post Office.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether any steps have yet been taken to fulfil the promise of his predecessor to supply horse haulage for mails and parcels between Longford Post Office and the railway station; and, if not, can he state the reason why the promise of his predecessor has not been given effect to.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): As stated to the hon. Member in a letter from the Post Office dated the 8th October last, I have sanctioned the employment of a horse and cart on the service in question. I am not aware that any difficulty has since arisen in the matter, but I am making inquiry and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Corry Postal Arrangements.

Mr. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the inhabitants of Corry, in the county of Westmeath, have memorialised the postal authorities requesting the establishment of a post office in that place; and whether, in view of the inconvenience caused by the absence of such an office and of the fact that letters reaching the nearest office for the district on Saturdays are detained till Monday morning, he will meet the wishes of the inhabitants by complying with their request.

Lord STANLEY: I have not as yet received any memorial asking for the establishment of a post office at Corry, but the question shall be considered and an answer sent to the hon. Member.

West Limerick Mail Service.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can state what is the reason for the dislocation of the mail service in West Limerick, seeing that, owing to the mail cart system, the mails have been frequently late in parts of the district to the inconvenience of the public.

LORD STANLEY: I regret that there has recently been irregularity in the mail service in West Limerick. Part of the delay has occurred on the railway to Limerick, and representations on the subject have been addressed to the company; but the principal cause of the irregularity has been loss of time by the mail cart contractor. I have accordingly found it necessary to terminate his contract, and I hope that a better service will be afforded in future.

In reply to a further Question,

LORD STANLEY said a motor-car service had been tried, but had not proved a success.

Irish Post Office Audit.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he intends, with a view to promoting economy and efficiency, to arrange that in future the audit, clerical, and printing work arising out of postal business in Ireland shall be done in that country.

LORD STANLEY: The work of auditing the accounts of Irish post offices, so far as the audit is conducted by the post office, is done in Ireland, except as regards certain branches of business where centralisation is expedient. The arrangements for the audit conducted by the Auditor-General are entirely under his control. Clerical and printing work arising out of postal business in Ireland is done in that country so far as is consistent with economy and efficiency.

Irish Manufacturers and Army Tenders.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of arranging that the receiving depôt already established in Dublin shall in future be utilised for the reception of tenders and samples of Irish manufacturers desirous to tender for Army supplies; whether he will arrange that civilian tradesmen will be more largely employed in the construction and repairs of all work in connection with cavalry outfits.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): The general questions involved have been the subject of considerable discussion in the past. It is believed that the expense and other disadvantages of the system proposed would outweigh any advantages it might present. The matter, however, shall receive further consideration.

Contracts for Imaal Military Camp.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he can state whether all or any of the contracts for provisions and forage supplied to the camp at Imaal, county Wicklow, are in the hands of local traders; and whether any of the contracts are in the hands of firms situated outside Ireland; and, if so, what provisions or forage are supplied by such firms.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The camp at Glen Imaal exists during the summer only. At the last camp the contracts for provisions and forage were held by Irish firms, and none were held by firms situated outside Ireland. As regards local traders, it must be remembered that Glen Imaal is in the depths of the Wicklow Mountains, and that there are no local traders capable of carrying out large contracts.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: Are there no traders in Dublin capable of carrying out such large contracts?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The policy of the Department is to give the contracts to local traders.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: Then why are they sent out of Ireland?

Fiscal Debate.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether His Majesty's Government will afford facilities for an adequate discussion of the fiscal question on a substantive

Motion, if, in the absence of the First Lord of the Treasury, Amendments to the Address on that subject are withdrawn. I may say in explanation that from what I hear I fear it is not at all probable that my right hon. friend the Prime Minister will be in his place on Monday, for which day notice has been given of an Amendment to the Address by the right. hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose. I think that, under the circumstances, the House will generally feel that a discussion on that subject would be quite unsatisfactory. [Opposition cries of "No."]

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The request of my right hon. friend is somewhat of an unusual character, but I frankly recognise that the absence of the Prime Minister creates a situation of temporary embarrassment in connection with the particular debate in which the House is anxious to take part. On the whole I am disposed to think that the suggestion of my right hon. friend is a reasonable one—[Opposition cries of "No."]—and therefore if it meets with the general agreement of the House to transfer the debate on the fiscal question from the Address to some subsequent date, I will endeavour to find time for such discussion when, as we all hope, the Prime Minister will be able to be in his place. At the same time, if right hon. Gentlemen opposite insist, as they have an undoubted right to insist, upon their title to discuss this matter upon the Address, then I must be released from my offer to give special facilities for a debate upon the same subject.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I do not know whether I will be in order, but I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose whether, in the circumstances, he will accept the offer and withdraw his Amendment?

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): May I ask the Home Secretary whether, if the course suggested were taken, it would be understood that no Amendment would be made to the Resolution expressing disagreement with the policy of the right hon. Member for Birmingham, but that a fair issue should be allowed without any interference from the Government one way or another so that the House might pronounce its opinion freely, without pressure?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: Of course I cannot bind the House in any question of this sort. It is entirely in the discretion of any Member to move any substantive Motion or Amendment thereto.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): In answer to the appeal of the right hon. Baronet, I am, of course, aware of the considerations which were probably present to his mind, but looking at all the circumstances, of last year for example, and the difficulties that seemed then to be interposed—I do not now examine how they arose—considering the great eagerness and expectancy in every quarter of this House, and certainly in the mind of the country, and considering further that, though the Prime Minister may be absent on Monday or Tuesday next, still there are present on the Front Bench opposite six or eight members of the Cabinet, who must be taken to possess a thorough grasp of all the arguments at the back of what is called the policy of the present Government, I regret very much to disappoint the right hon. Baronet, but I think I should be disappointing a much larger number of Gentlemen in the House, and certainly a larger body outside, if I were to comply with his request. Therefore, on whatever may be the most convenient day, I shall be bound to move my Motion.

Government Tariff Policy.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, when do His Majesty's Government propose to make a statement of their intentions with regard to their tariff policy; and do His Majesty's Government intend to exclude taxation on food from their programme.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS (for Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) said: Any statement on the subject of the Government policy had better be deferred, I think, until the return of the Prime Minister.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Will the right hon. Gentleman state that he is neither empowered on behalf of the Prime Minister to make a statement nor is he himself aware of the policy of the Government?

***MR. AKERS DOUGLAS**: I am perfectly aware of the policy of the Government, but, as I have said, I think it would be more satisfactory to have a statement made by the Prime Minister.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

[THIRD DAY.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question (2nd February), "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Question again proposed.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.) continued the speech interrupted at midnight yesterday. He said that in the course of a journey he made in that part of Europe he found that not only had a great number of villages been burnt down, but the population of others had been forced to fly over the Bulgarian frontier. He could not understand the reason of their exclusion from the Austro-Russian scheme of reform. Was it due to their proximity to Constantinople, or to the fact that no insurrection had broken out in that part? It was a matter of great regret that up to the present not a single word seemed to have been said as to the propriety of including the Adrianople vilayet in any further proposals for reform in European Turkey. There seemed to be a want of machinery for putting the reform scheme into operation. He did not wish to labour the discussion on that point, but events had already shown that so long as there was a Turkish governor, whether Christian or Mohammedan, at one end of the telegraph wire and the Sultan at the other, so long would there be delay and obstruction, and so long would the reforms be unable to penetrate down to the people to whom they ought to apply. He believed that the Government realised, but he was anxious that the House should realise, how serious and urgent the question was. In eight or nine weeks from now they might expect something to happen. He believed that—things had so long drifted—unless some very active steps were taken it would be absolutely impossible to prevent a fresh insurrection. There was no doubt whatever that the leaders were ready for a fresh insurrection. His own opinion—possibly it did not coincide with that of the noble Lord opposite—was that they had to face the fact that in a few weeks time that part of the Peninsula would again be ablaze. The losses of the insurgents had been insignificant, inasmuch as the Turkish Troops had followed the dangerous policy of chasing the bandits into the mountains and of burning and exterminating their villages. He was informed on very good authority that their losses would not be more than 5 per cent. These losses would be much more than made up by recruits from the tens of thousands of refugees—the men who had lost everything close to the Bulgarian frontier, and who were only too ready to start upon a course which promised the recovery of their property.

Apart from the danger of an insurrection, there was the still greater danger of a Turco-Bulgarian war. His own belief was that it would be difficult to avert a Turco-Bulgarian war. It was very easy to blame the Bulgarians for what was called their provocative attitude, but he very much questioned whether any other nation in the world would have stood quiet so long. For many years past, owing to the uncertainty of life and property in European Turkey, a crowd of people had emigrated every year from Macedonia into Bulgaria. At the present moment they were supported by Government contributions and private subscriptions, the refugees were estimated by *The Times* correspondent at Philippopolis as early as September at 30,000. The Bulgarians desired to avoid war, because they knew they had a good deal to lose, but he did not believe that if there were fresh massacres it would be possible for the Government of that country to avoid war. What was the British Government going to to? A report from one of our Vice-Consuls stated that the Turks were ready for massacre, and that it was commonly reported in every Turkish barracks that, in the event of an insurrection and a Turco-Bulgarian war, they would burn and destroy every village on their march so as to leave no enemies behind them. The House was entitled to ask, in view of these facts, what His Majesty's Government proposed to do to prevent those horrors which otherwise must certainly ensue. His firm conviction was that nothing would really be effective short of occupation by all the Powers, such as was successful in Crete. A mere interchange of papers between the different Embassies, with their gendarmerie scheme, however well intentioned, and with the appointment of assessors, however able, could not possibly prevent an insurrection or attain the end which Lord Lansdowne laid down as the end to be sought, namely, that the people themselves should no longer join or sympathise with the operations of insurgent bands. He believed that no reform could be made effective, in that sense, short of actual occupation of that country by the great Powers. But if His Majesty's Government were not prepared for that, he thought the House had a right to ask, in view of the gravity of the situation, that they should distinctly formulate their policy.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): I understand it is the general wish of the House to proceed before long to the discussion of another subject, and perhaps it will be for the general convenience that I should reply to the speeches delivered on the very important question of the situation in Macedonia. In the first place I should like to pay a tribute to the spirit in which all the speakers who have taken part in the debate up to this point have addressed themselves to the subject, and to their recognition of the efforts which have been made by His Majesty's Government. It is, of course, very easy to point out defects in the present reform scheme. The hon. Member who has just sat down alluded to one of them when he said that it did not include the Adrianople vilayet in which a great deal of disturbance has recently occurred. The Sultan volunteered his own intention some months ago of expanding the present scheme so as to include the Adrianople vilayet, and we may trust that the result of the application of these reforms to other provinces will strengthen the Sultan in his laudable decision. There are a great many defects which can be pointed out in the present scheme, but I think it should be remembered that that scheme is not ours, and that although we have from time to time suggested amendments and alterations, all of which have been in the nature of improvements, and most of which have been ultimately, if somewhat tardily, accepted, yet we have no desire whatever to claim credit for the authorship of that scheme. In the preparation of that scheme we were not ourselves consulted, and the credit as well as the responsibility for that scheme rests in the first instance upon the two Powers who have assumed the initiative with the full approval and concurrence of all the Powers signatories to the Treaty of Berlin. I think that some hon. Members who have spoken in this debate have expressed regret, which is, I think, also felt by the leaders of the revolutionary movement, that the authority of Europe should, so to speak, have been put into commission in this way, and that we should have delegated a kind of Power of Attorney to Austria and Russia to deal with a situation which arose out of a settlement originally international in its character. Well, whatever may be said in favour of that view, I think it is a view which cannot with propriety be urged by those who on so many occasions have poured contempt and ridicule upon the delays—on the interminable delays—which are associated with the machinery of collective intervention by all the European Powers. But however that may be, it has been throughout our policy to act in conjunction with Austria and Russia. We have frequently stated the reasons that determined us to act in that manner, and I think they are reasons which, on the whole, have commended themselves to the common sense of the country. In the first place it is our duty to put British interests in the foreground, and it is not our opinion that British interests are so vitally concerned as to demand our taking the initiative ourselves. In the second place we think the objects we have at heart are objects which can probably be better fulfilled by the action of Austria and Russia than by any other method.

What are those objects? In the first place we desire to avert a violent disturbance of the existing condition of things which must awaken many difficult questions, open a great many vexed international controversies, and possibly arouse a wide-spread conflagration. That view was nowhere more strongly or emphatically expressed than in the *aide-memoire* which was presented by the two Powers to the Porte on the occasion of the formulation of the second reform scheme. In that *aide-memoire* they were very careful to emphasise the fact that they had spared no effort to meet the susceptibilities of the Porte by confining the period of their intervention in the reform scheme to two years, and by maintaining at the head of the administration a Turkish official. But the object of His Majesty's Government is not confined to the maintenance of the *status quo*. We desire, as every humane man must desire, to obtain a real and, if possible, a permanent amelioration of the condition of the population of the European provinces of Turkey. That amelioration can only be produced under two conditions. Turkey must recognise that, however excellent her laws may be in theory, the actual practice of her administration is one which her best friends cannot defend, which constitutes a glaring violation of her solemn treaty engagements, and which is at once a menace to the security of her own rule and to the peace and tranquility of the neighbouring provinces. But there is another condition, and that is that the European Powers should be able to convince the law-abiding element of the population—which comprises, I believe, the large majority, if not all, of the non-Bulgarian element, and which I would fain believe comprises a large proportion of the Bulgarian population also—of the determination and ability of Europe not only to procure for them securities against misgovernment in the future, but also to protect them against that kind of tyranny and terrorism by which political agitators for months past have sought to prolong the disturbances and to make the introduction of any real reforms in the provinces impossible. These being the objects of the Government, I think it is manifest that they can best be secured by the two Powers Austria and Russia. They are the two Powers who have most to fear from a reopening of the Eastern question; they are nearest to the scene of action, and, therefore, in the best position to bring material pressure to bear; and, owing to racial and religious affinity, they have the best cause to sympathise with, and the best means of understanding, the sufferings and requirements of the population on whose behalf intervention is sought.

So much for the policy of resigning the initiative to the Austrian and Russian Governments. But His Majesty's Government have always insisted at the same time, and their claims have been frankly met by both of these Governments, on their right to suggest amendments and alterations. These have been directed hitherto to improvement of the details of the scheme, and not to vital changes in its principle. The principle of the scheme we have accepted, and in the opinion of persons best qualified to judge, that principle is well adapted to meet the requirements of the situation. That, at all events, is the opinion of Sir Nicholas O'Conor, our Ambassador at Constantinople; and I understand from a document published by the Balkan Committee at home in *The Times* only two months ago that they do not themselves dissent from that view. Of course, if these hopes and expectations should unfortunately be falsified it will be the duty of the Government and of all the European Powers to reconsider their position; but I do not think that we should be justified in allowing our hands to be forced, or in assuming as a sufficient proof of the failure of the reform scheme the mere fact of the continued hostility of political irreconcilables who, it appears, if they are to be judged by their actions, would regard the success of the reform scheme as the main obstacle to the realisation of their political ambitions.

That that is so I am afraid we have had only too much evidence already. The fact that under the first reform scheme those who profited by the amnesty took the first opportunity of rejoining the insurgents; the fact that, as in the case of the Armenian reform scheme, the Bulgarian element almost entirely stood aloof from the reorganisation of the gendarmerie, and that, at all events in one instance, and I am afraid it will be found in more than one, those Bulgarians who have already enlisted have paid the penalty of their temerity with their lives—these facts show to my mind only too clearly the motive of the political pressure which has been brought to bear.

So far as the action of His Majesty's Government is concerned, I think we may make two claims. We may claim that if there has been any delay in the execution of these reforms—and there certainly has been a very regrettable delay—the responsibility for that delay does not attach to us. We have throughout insisted that in our opinion it is far more important that an imperfect reform scheme should be applied promptly and at once, than that we should waste precious time before applying any reform scheme at all. I think we may claim, in the second place, that we have anticipated by our advice many of the best features in the reform scheme as it now stands, and that some of our suggestions might with very great advantage have been adopted at an earlier period. I refer more especially to our proposal that European officers should be allowed and invited to accompany the Turkish troops during active operations. If that proposal had been accepted at once it might have had the effect of very largely checking the excesses and irregularities on the part of the Turkish soldiers, and it would certainly have had the effect, which the Turks themselves ought to welcome, of furnishing Europe with authentic information gathered on the spot, and not with garbled and exaggerated versions of massacre and outrage. That proposal was first made by Sir Nicholas O'Conor at the very beginning of August. On the 28th of that month he was still able to report that, although there were as many as 200,000 Turkish troops in the field, on the whole discipline had been very fairly maintained. In that connection I cannot pass over without mention a remark made last night by my hon. friend who raised this subject. Without in the least seeking to palliate or excuse any of the outrages or excesses committed by the Turkish troops—for they admit of no excuse or palliation—and without seeking to estimate the relative guilt of outrages perpetrated by men who are suffering under a sense of great grievances and outrages inflicted by an army which is in a state of great exasperation and has suffered long and deliberate provocation, yet at the same time I do not think that the hon. Member was justified in saying that, whatever might have been the action of the committees, they had not been guilty of the appalling outrages on women and children which had been committed by the Turkish troops, regular and irregular. I do not deny that that has been the case as regards the Turkish irregular troops, but anyone who reads candidly and carefully the last Blue-book but one will see perfectly clearly that the nature and character—I do not say the extent—of the outrages committed by the revolutionary troops have been exactly on all fours with the nature of the outrages committed by the Turkish troops. Up to the last week in August discipline had been fairly maintained. The greater part of the excesses of the Turkish troops dated from the beginning of September, when the irregulars were called out to cope with the invasion of the vilayets of Kossovo and Salonica. When His Majesty's Government made this proposal with regard to the officers it was rejected by the Russian Government as somewhat premature. It was renewed on two subsequent occasions, when we had the support of the Italian Government. On the 29th September we were informed that the principle was to be embodied in the new reform scheme, and we at once took steps to warn the officers whom we ourselves intended to employ.

Earl Percy.

Our action has been the same in regard to the gendarmerie reorganisation and the employment of European advisers in the chief administrative and judicial departments. Both proposals were pressed upon the Sultan by Sir Nicholas O'Conor as far back as the close of 1902, before any reform scheme had been formulated by the European Powers, and when the Sultan had himself taken the initiative by appointing an inspector-general with a committee to sift evidence, and by laying down rules for the admission of a Christian element into the *gendarmerie*. It has always been the opinion of the Government that what is required in the Turkish provinces is not political change so much as thorough administrative re-organisation. Turkey does not possess the class of men who have the requisite expert knowledge and experience to carry out such a task as that, and for her to come to Europe for trained assistance involves no more derogation of her sovereign rights than is already involved in the admission of European management in the case of the Ottoman Bank and the control of the Ottoman Debt, or in the reorganisation by Europeans of the Turkish army. The necessity and importance of financial reform was explicitly recognised by Austria and Russia in their first reform scheme, in which they laid down that a budget was to be drawn up for each of the Macedonian provinces, that the revenues of those provinces were to be checked by the Imperial Ottoman Bank, and that the expenses of administration were to form a first charge on the provincial revenues. It is a source of great regret to His Majesty's Government that the opportunity was not taken at the time of the elaboration of the second reform scheme to work out those provisions in detail, but we have been assured that their importance has not been lost sight of. At this moment I believe that the inspector-general, in company with the two European assessors, is sitting at Salonica in order to draw up a detailed scheme of financial and administrative reorganisation. Financial reform lies at the root of real administrative improvement, and it will become more and more imperative every day with the great additional expenditure which will be cast upon Turkey by the adoption of reforms, as, I think, we have sufficient evidence already in the large extra taxation, amounting to £2,000,000, which has been recently imposed. The Government trust that the Sultan will himself recognise before it is too late that it is the absence of financial reform which makes judicial and administrative corruption inevitable, which has already reduced the Turkish Empire to the verge of penury, and which, if allowed to continue, will certainly bring it to ruin.

I do not know that I can give any further information beyond stating the position in which the reform scheme stands. The inspector-general has occupied his post for some months, and, according to information which has already been published in the Blue-book, has not laid himself open to the kind of censure which seems to be implied in the speech of the hon. Member for West Donegal. On the contrary, he has shown very conspicuous energy and a praiseworthy determination to do whatever he can to make the reforms a reality. Two assessors—both of them possessing a large experience of Eastern affairs—have been appointed, and have taken up their work. As regards the scheme for the reorganisation of the gendarmerie, the Italians have already selected a general who is to take command. All the Powers have appointed their staff officers, and I believe that, with the possible exception of the German staff officer, they have arrived at Constantinople and will immediately enter upon their duties. Colonel Fairholme, the officer whom His Majesty's Government has appointed, is military attaché at Vienna. These staff officers will consider the details of the scheme of reorganisation which has been drawn up in consultation by the two military attachés of Russia and Austria. As regards the non-commissioned officers, a certain number of European officers, belonging chiefly to the minor European States, were enrolled in the Turkish service some months ago. Four Belgian officers were employed in Macedonia, and since then additional Swedish and Norwegian officers have been engaged. It will be necessary that each of the Powers should depute probably a fairly large number of non-commissioned officers to assist their respective staff officers in the actual work of reorganisation. His Majesty's Government are awaiting the report of their delegates on the scheme of reorganisation before sending out the officers whom they intend to depute. I can only say, in conclusion, that it is the determination of His Majesty's Government to use their most earnest, constant, and uninterrupted endeavours to press forward the execution of the provisions of the reform scheme in their entirety. If we do not at the present juncture discuss the question of an alternative policy it is because we desire to emphasise the solidarity of the European Powers, because we are reluctant to admit the failure of a scheme which, if failure there be, must entail untold misery and suffering, whatever the ultimate result, upon the whole Christian population of Macedonia, and because, in the last place, we certainly do not desire to offer any pretext to the Turkish Government to allege as an excuse for reluctance to apply the reform scheme at once, the idea that any concession made to the Powers will only be the prelude for further demands.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): The Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs has admitted that this Macedonian question has never been made in this House the means of any Party attack whatever. The discussions in the country which have occupied the minds of the people to a large extent were conducted without any reference to Party. Therefore we are now in a favourable position for discussing the matter. The troubles in Macedonia have arisen from long continued misgovernment of the Turkish Empire. It has been nothing but the existence of abominable oppression and tyranny that has given other Powers an opportunity to come into the field at all. The Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs appears to have very greatly minimised the horrible atrocities committed by the Turkish troops, and he has compared them with what has been done by the insurgents, and compares them favourably. He seems to ignore altogether the fact that the Turkish atrocities have been committed upon innocent subjects. In one case given in Sir Nicholas O'Conor's report, it is shown that a village was surrounded by regular Turkish troops, and the people were set upon by a number of Bashi-Bazouks, who slaughtered everybody with the exception of about two men. I do not think all the acts of cruelty perpetrated by the insurgents can parallel that one case.

Earl Percy.

*EARL PERCY: The right hon. Gentleman must remember that I did not compare the scale on which these atrocities had been committed. What I said was that the attacks upon women and children had been made by the insurgents in exactly the same way as by the Turkish troops.

MR. BRYCE: I submit that they cannot be considered as acting in the same way as the regular Turkish troops. As regards provocation the case is entirely different, for in the cases of cruelty by Turkish troops there was no provocation at all, and many of the outrages perpetrated by those troops have been accompanied by horrors which it would not be right to mention in this House. They consisted of outrages upon women, and acts of savage and incredible cruelty for which there is no parallel in the conduct of the insurgents. Apart from these points I have no criticism to make. Let me now state what I believe to be the broad outlines of the position. In the first place, no one can have followed this story and read these Blue-books without seeing from the first that Austria and Russia have been entirely half-hearted in this matter. What the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs has said about the special interest of Austria and Russia is perfectly true, and it might have been the case before 1902, but the experience of the last two years has shown that they have no desire to remove discontent in those parts. The inhabitants there have lost confidence in the promises of Austria and Russia, and are endeavouring now to seek safety in some other quarter. In the next place, the Turks are absolutely incorrigible. They have gone on in their old way, repeating the same kind of conduct and the same cruelty which shocked Europe in 1876. There is nothing to choose between their conduct now and their conduct in 1876, and the most complete proof of this is that these things are being done with the approval and connivance of the Sultan, because nobody has ever been punished for these outrages except in the case of the murder of the Russian Consul. There have been many cases of the grossest possible outrage where the perpetrators have not been punished; all the evils which went on last summer are still going on. The burnt villages have not been rebuilt and taxes are being levied upon the inhabitants of some of these burnt villages. According to the report of the Consul of Monastir there are 14,000 refugees homeless there at the present moment. The first scheme was confessedly useless, and was accepted by the Sultan because the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs said he knew it would be so. There was no intention of applying the present scheme in the vilayet of Adrianople. In the fourth place, the danger at this moment is very great. We know that the insurgent bands are still in the mountains, that there is great excitement in Bulgaria, that the present Bulgarian Government has got a large majority in favour of war, and we know that it will be extremely difficult for them to restrain these bands or their own people unless there is some substantial improvement within the course of the next six weeks. I suppose the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs admits that to be the fact. Therefore there is a very serious danger that the insurrection will begin afresh, and be accompanied by the outbreak of a war between Turkey and Bulgaria.

But there is a new feature in the situation which very greatly aggravates it. I am sure everybody in this House must hope that there will be no war in the Far East between the two Powers which are now watching one another with so much suspicion. We must, however, contemplate the eventuality of the outbreak of a war between Russia and Japan as being possible. What will the result of that be in the Balkan Peninsula? It is desired both by Turkey and Bulgaria because they believe if Russia were occupied elsewhere she could not put that restraint upon their action which she now can, and the Turks think they could finish off the Macedonians and reduce Bulgaria to her old rule. I think those who have followed the reports of Continental nations will agree that it is generally believed over Europe that the danger of war in the Near East would be greatly aggravated if war was to break out in the Far East. In these circumstances surely this is an exceedingly difficult position before this country. We must all agree with the aim which the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs has set before us. Everybody desires, I am sure, that peace should be preserved, that the reforms should be proceeded with, and the danger of a European war averted. But have the Powers taken the best means to secure that end? I do not complain of what has been done by Lord Lansdowne, for he has shown an earnest desire to improve and strengthen these reform schemes as much as possible. Where his suggestions have not been accepted it would have been a good thing if they had been, and if he had taken even a stronger line than he has taken, and insisted upon the necessity of improving the scheme, I think we should have been in a better position to-day. We do not know from the Blue-books whether he has communicated with the Governments of France and Italy in reference to what will be done in case this scheme should fail. I am sure the House will feel that the Government ought to have considered those eventualities, that they ought to feel that if this scheme fails owing to the difficulties being thrown in its way, an excessively dangerous crisis will arise, and it will be necessary for the Government to consider, along with the Governments of France and Italy, what should be done. Any improvements of the scheme should include the supersession of direct Turkish rule in Bulgaria. Therefore, I would urge the Government to consider the advisability of arriving at some arrangement with the other European Powers which will provide for the case of the failure of this scheme, and which will enable them when there is a danger of war breaking out, say in the month of April, to arrest it by announcing the scheme which will stop the insurrection and keep Bulgaria quiet. That would be a far better course than the continual wrangling of the Turks over this scheme. While acknowledging what Lord Lansdowne has done, I believe if he takes a still firmer tone he will have, as was shown by the meetings which went on during the autumn, and by everyone who has spoken in this House, the general and hearty support of the people in adopting a decided line in this matter. It will be to the honour of England if we are able at this moment to save Eastern Europe from a perpetuation of her present troubles and from the danger of a Continental war.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire), who was indistinctly heard, said there were one or two points which he should like to refer to with regard to this very serious question. They could treat this matter from a non-Party view because in every quarter of the House there was nothing but horror and detestation for the cruelties which the Turks had committed. But those who had investigated these matters, and had seen with their own eyes what had happened, declared that things were far worse than had been described in the Blue-books. Whilst thanking the Government for what they had done, he still thought they might have done a little more. He was quite of opinion that unless they acted in a stronger way than they had hitherto done war would break out again in that quarter. The people there had made up their minds to fight; there were plenty of men and rifles; their houses had been burnt down and their property taken from them. Consequently they had nothing to lose, and were determined to wreak their revenge in a bloody war and do everything they could against their enemies. That was the state of things, and whilst Russia was indifferent to these reforms, Turkey was quite indisposed to entertain anything whatever of the kind. If they looked at these matters from that point of view the position was very serious. Russia was entirely indifferent and apathetic in regard to moving in this matter of reform in order to prevent suffering and further war. He was quite sure that Lord Lansdowne and the Foreign Office would do their best; he agreed that they had a very difficult part to play, and they had an alternative policy at their hand. He trusted that His Majesty's Government might see their way very shortly to produce this alternative scheme if the present scheme was not carried out.

*MR. ROBSON (South Shields): Mr. Speaker, I rise to move the Amendment standing in my name. That Amendment charges Ministers who were in office at the period of the war with negligence in relation to preparations for the war and its subsequent conduct. That is a serious charge and a personal charge; and I am sorry, and the entire House will be sorry, that I have to make it under Parliamentary exigencies which I cannot control, in the absence of the Prime Minister, who undoubtedly would have been here to meet it had he been able. I shall certainly say nothing against the Prime Minister that may not be dealt with by his colleagues. The charge I make is a failure on the part of Ministers to perform the first duty incumbent on a Government—namely, to provide for the safety of its territories in view of threatening attack. This is not merely a complaint of general unpreparedness for some unexpected contingency. It is a more serious and specific matter than that. It is alleged against the Government that it failed to take precautions and to exercise ordinary foresight and care in spite of ample, distinct, and repeated warnings. Before I deal with the details and instances of the negligence which I allege against the Government, let us first of all endeavour to clear our minds as to the precise scope of the duties in regard to which negligence is alleged. The Prime Minister himself has helped us very materially in this task. In his speech at the Hotel Cecil he pointed out the nature of the problem which faces an English Government in the matter of Imperial and National defence; and when we understand what he regards as the great difficulty we are helped to some definition of the duty thrown on the Government. The Prime Minister says that whereas French and German Ministers are quite familiar with every possible theatre of warlike operations to which they might be required to send troops, and while they also know the number and quality of the troops against which they may be called upon to operate, to an English Minister the problem is indeterminate. The Prime Minister pointed out that we cannot know from day to day and from time to time when we may be required to send our troops or in what climate they may be required to work, nor do we know far in advance the precise quality of the foe we may be called upon to meet; and further that even with our own material for war there is some uncertainty, because it is a vountary army and we cannot quite predict its quantity or cost. No one could phrase the general proposition better than the Prime Minister has done. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has, I think, put it a little less pleasantly, and I hope also a little less accurately. He says we are always unprepared. I should be sorry to accept that as being true in its fullest extent; but no doubt there is a certain sense in which that phrase is entirely true. If we are always unprepared it is well, however, to remember that a statesman who intervenes in an international dispute which might lead to war would require apparently a double dose of caution and of courtesy in dealing with such situations, because if we are always unprepared obviously one aim of our diplomacy must be to give our soldiers time for preparation. One can scarcely imagine under such circumstances anything more perilous or more dangerous than what used to be called the new diplomacy, a mode of diplomacy which insisted on the instant publication of highly controversial despatches which inflamed public feeling in such a way as to make it almost impossible to secure a lengthy diplomatic pause if our soldiers happened to require it. I think we shall see as the story develops with what deadly effect that method of diplomacy operated to quicken the pace and precipitate the catastrophy against which our soldiers were warning us.

The first duty, therefore, which appears to lie on a British s atesman may be gathered from the utterances of the First Lord of the Treasury and the late Colonial Secretary. It is undoubtedly this. As soon as any Government is warned of a definite urgent and imminent danger it ought at once to set its soldiers to consider in a thorough and systematic way the military necessities of the situation. I do not say that with a vast Empire like ours the British Government should be always scenting war. On the contrary, I think it would be a very dangerous temperament for any Minister to possess. I do not suggest, although many do with a fair show of justice, that we should have plans of campaign for all conceivable conflicts. But where a Minister has been amply and repeatedly warned that some other country is preparing for a conflict with us, then he should at least have a plan of campaign for that contingency. That seems to me to be a very modest standard of a Minister's duty. That duty I hope to show, and show as briefly as I may, was neglected, and gravely neglected. I am not sure that even the word "neglect" adequately describes the omission, because when one speaks of neglecting a duty, it rather implies that, although undertaken, the duty was badly done. But this duty was never, in any substantial sense, undertaken—it was omitted. That is the point, and it is a very serious point. It is almost impossible to imagine one more grave. That is the foundation of the charge brought against the Government by their own Commission. During all these years of hostile negotiations, though warning after warning was given, there never was, from first to last, any plan of campaign in operation in South Africa. That, then, is the first duty by which I propose to test the conduct of the Ministry. The second can scarcely be mentioned without some appearance of irony. It is that an English Government warned of an impending conflict should take the trouble to consider, and should even go so far as to decide, what its attitude should be with regard to other Powers, and whether it would have to fight one Power or two or more Powers, because until the Government had done that, the soldiers could not prepare a plan of campaign. I ask the House to keep that fact in mind. An effort has been made to cast the responsibility for our mistakes and mischances upon the Army. Let us then remember the dominant fact that a plan of campaign had of course, in the first instance, to be ordered by the Civil Government; and that it cannot be laid down at all until you know where you are going to fight and who you are going to fight. Up till the last moment, indeed until it was too late, the Government omitted to tell the soldiers what enemies they had to prepare a plan of campaign against, and until that was done the soldiers had to wait for the decision of what was indeed a purely political question. The third duty which I venture to submit is incumbent on every Minister lies in the fact that, having regard to what the Colonial Secretary describes as our perennial unpreparedness, he should keep diplomacy and military preparations in something like accord. He should take care that military preparations did not unduly lag behind diplomacy; but, above all, he should take care that diplomacy did not outrun a necessary state of preparedness.

In any test, then, as to the performance of these duties let us bear in mind the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury at the Hotel Cecil, to which I have already referred. He there sought to create in the minds of his audience the impression that this was only another instance of the general unpreparedness with which the English nation was prepared to be content; and that Ministers could not be expected to know the theatre of operations or the precise kind of enemy our soldiers would be called upon to meet. Nothing could be more inaccurate. In this case all uncertainty was absolutely removed. The Government knew, none could know better, exactly where the theatre of operations would be, and the character of the war. It has been assiduously sought to create in the mind of the British public that Ministers were unprepared through no fault of their own. That impression has now no right to be held in the public mind after the publication of this Report; and I am very glad that the time has come at last when public justice may be done to the work of the Intelligence Division. That great and admirable division of the War Office and its work has been alternately neglected and maligned, and something like justice has been done it by the Report of the Commission. But I do not think that even the Commission has done adequate justice to the extraordinary excellence of the work of the Intelligence Department. I venture to say that, although in this war one had a great deal to lament and to criticise, the work of the Intelligence Department seems to be almost above criticism. When one looks at the warnings it gave and the information it supplied one is disposed almost, even now, to ask, looking back on the war and all we have to regret and to learn, was there anything which the Government needed which the Intelligence Department did not tell them? Certainly so far as facts were concerned, almost nothing. The only criticism that could be made against the Department was that in one or two particulars it did not seem to express a right opinion; but as regards the supply of material facts there is no criticism to be made. Take, for instance, the Report of the Intelligence Department immediately after the Jameson Raid. The Department seem to have appreciated the significance of that raid. They exercised to a certain degree an intelligent anticipation as to the consequences that might ensue, and they therefore began at once to warn the Government. Major Altham pointed out what the result of the raid had been on the relations between the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, and there were no less than a series of twelve other full and admirable reports from the Intelligence Department in 1896 to 1899. They are brought up to date in June, 1899, and that is the report I have in my hand. This is by no means the last, but I take this as being one which is teeming with warnings and information. It begins by giving an elaborate account of all the physical difficulties of the Dutch Republics for military operations, and then it goes on to speak of their armament. We remember, when the war broke out, one of our Ministers expressed pained surprise at the excellent arms and guns these Boer peasants possessed. That with most people conveyed the impression that the Government were really surprised, but the Intelligence Department, year by year, ever since 1892, gave statistics of every gun the Boers possessed, and the only error which they committed was to make the warning they gave rather stronger than it need have been. The Intelligence Division warned the Government that the Boers had 107 guns. There was therefore no uncertainty; the problem was not indeterminate. With regard to men, the whole military organisation of the Transvaal is described with a lucidity that is simply marvellous. Great stress is laid on their mobility. Another Minister expressed surprise that not only had the Boers guns but that they were mounted. Yet that was one of the matters upon which the Intelligence Division was most precise. I would ask the House to listen to one sentence that might have been written after instead of before the war—

"As regards mobility it must be recollected that the force which was defeated at Laings Nek and Ingogo was operating on foot, and with practically no mounted troops, against men whose hunting experience had taught them to get the utmost use out of their horses in approaching, surprising, and surrounding large herds of wild antelopes. Moreover, South Africa is of all countries perhaps the most dangerous in the world for infantry to

> operate in without a screen of mounted troops in the near front and on their flanks."

And then it goes on to describe their tactics—tactics which we all became painfully aware of during the course of the war—

> "The tactics employed by the Boers were in fact such as they had learnt by hunting experiences on the veldt. Alike in attack and defence they acted on the same principle, containing the enemy's front, with a thin but well posted body of skirmishers they utilised every fold of ground to gallop unseen round his flanks, and then leaving their horses, which are trained to stand without holders under cover, gradually concentrated a ring of overwhelming fire on their objective."

There is the origin of a good many of those painful surrenders which it pains us even now to remember or mention. That was a very precise warning as to the mode in which these surrenders were likely to be brought about. The Report goes on to explain the skill with which they take advantage of cover and concentrate this overwhelming fire on their opponents without practically the loss of a single life. Turning over the page, one scarcely knows what extracts to take from it, I find this—

> "At the outset of war they would, no doubt, boldly take the offensive against Cape Town or Kimberley, a serious engagement would necessarily ensue before our columns had penetrated far into the Republican territory. Defeat in such an engagement would, as has been already said, involve such disintegration of the Boer forces as to terminate the war."

Then there is this piece of information, and I wonder what we should have thought if we had known that the Government knew this before the war—

> "General Joubert said in conversation in March, 1898, that a scheme for such offensive action had been drawn up by a German officer, but was not yet approved. A report from a reliable source dated June, 1899, states that the present Boer plan of campaign contemplates a concentration with the Free State forces west of the Drakensberg and an advance on Ladysmith through Van Reenans Pass."

So that before the war broke out we had the Intelligence Division foretelling the advance against Ladysmith; foretelling its method and the danger of such an advance to this country. So much for means and methods, though I might go further and point to the amount of ammunition they had accumulated almost to a round, and the sites where that ammunition was stored. I counted myself something like twenty-three places, which would have indicated to anybody except the Ministers on that Bench that a guerilla warfare was contemplated.

I now desire to draw attention to the Report in one particular respect, which, I think, outweighs all other considerations. The most material thing to be considered by the Government, both in directing operations or in moulding their diplomacy, was the attitude of the Orange Free State. That is the matter on which their ignorance seems now to be most complete and profound. They knew nothing of the organisation or the military armaments or men of the Transvaal, but their ignorance of the Orange Free State is most black. Just let me tell the House how matters stood in the Orange Free State—that is a very important fact—after the peace in 1881. In 1881 there was a treaty, offensive and defensive, between the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, by which the Orange Free State bound itself to assist the Transvaal if it thought the cause of the Transvaal was just. After the Jameson Raid that treaty was revised; it was made again in a somewhat different and a slightly stronger phraseology. In 1897 there were the same conditions, entirely, except that the Orange Free State was to be at liberty to withdraw from offensive and defensive operations with the Transvaal if they thought the cause was unjust. That is to say, in 1897 the Orange Free State bound itself to act with the Transvaal unless it could show or prove the quarrel was unjust. That was the only condition on which the Orange Free State could avoid the obligations cast on it by this treaty. That was in 1897. Afterwards came a long period of hostile negotiations, right down to 1899, and in June, 1899, a very important event took place which had the greatest bearing on the matter. In June, 1899, there was the Bloemfontein Conference. The proposal made at that Conference came to be considered in the Free State Raad. Then was the time for the Orange Free State to make its treaty absolute or let it go altogether. If the Orange Free State had said, We think Mr. Kruger's cause is unjust, then the treaty goes. But after the Bloemfontein Conference the Orange Free State Raad passed a resolution affirming its agreement with Mr. Kruger on his proposal. Nobody could doubt for a moment then that Mr. Kruger's view was also the view of the Orange Free State. That was the state of circumstances in June, 1899, and, as all of us know, the war broke out in October of that year. That only states in a short way that which is stated over and over again in the course of these reports, that the Orange Free State intended to throw in their lot with the sister Republic, and Sir John Ardagh said that this agreement was no dead letter. Ample provision was made for joint operations, and Sir John Ardagh goes on to say that apart altogether from these treaties there was already ample provision made for joint operations, and that in fact the Orange Free State was being armed at the cost of the Transvaal with armaments and ammunition. They had worked out their scheme completely. Sir John Ardagh sent a copy of a resolution, passed apparently in secret session of the Transvaal Raad, that they must arm others besides themselves. There was no question, therefore, in June, 1899, as to the attitude of the Orange Free State. These two States were in a condition of absolute solidarity. What then did the soldiers ask His Majesty's Government for? They wanted to know what the route was to be in order to approach the Transvaal, and that question was not settled until too late. On 28th November, 1899, the First Lord of the Treasury made a speech at Dewsbury in which he explained what he understood to be the state of things with regard to the Orange Free State. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "If I had been asked two months ago whether it was likely we should be at war with the Orange Free State, I should have said that you might as well expect us to be at war with Switzerland. They were local friends from whom we had nothing to fear, and who had nothing to fear from us."

This was said of a State that had made an offensive and defensive alliance for combined offensive operations against us, and had intimated that they made their own the *casus belli* of their neighbour. In January, 1900, the First Lord of the Treasury repeated the same statement. Some colleague, perhaps some colleague connected with the Colonial Office, might surely have warned the right hon. Gentleman that he was wrong. The right hon. Gentleman, addressing his constituents at Manchester, referred to the intention of the Boers to precipitate a struggle from which they hoped to gain some national advantage, and then he goes on and observes—

> "This was not a question on which the Government had, could have, or ever pretended to have, special means of information. There have been, and there may be, European questions on which the public cannot be taken into the confidence of the Government of the day. The Government of the day may know perfectly, and secretly, facts about the intents of this or that foreign Government which impose on them a certain policy which they cannot communicate in any fulness of detail to their fellow countrymen. But in this case there were no secrets, everybody was on an equality. The man in the street knew as much as the man in the Cabinet. If I held the view that peace was a possibility, I held it with the great mass of public opinion."

Just imagine a statement like that with these twelve reports lying apparently undusted upon the shelves of some Government Department. There is no parallel in English history to this case of a Government receiving warnings like these year after year, month after month, touching Imperial peace, and neglecting them, so as to show in the end a state of hopeless and helpless ignorance such as the First Lord of the Treasury showed at the end of 1900. He was not the only member of the Cabinet who did not appreciate the situation. I do not wish to trouble the House with extracts, but you remember a speech of the late Prime Minister on this matter. I think the Duke of Devonshire also intimated that so far as he was concerned he had not been made acquainted with the imminence of the danger arising from the Orange Free State. Here we have got the First Lord of the Treasury, who was a member of the Cabinet Committee of Defence, and it would appear that these reports were not laid before that august body. I daresay, like other bodies which are to be constituted under the new reform scheme, that body became too august to be active. Neither were the reports asked for by the First Lord of the Treasury. Of course they would have been produced, but the right hon. Gentleman seems to have forgotten the existence of the Intelligence Department altogether. It was no momentary lapse of memory such as might occur with anyone engaged in the absorbing duties of First Lord of the Treasury and Leader of this House; it was a forgetfulness that continued for three and a half years of anxious and perilous crises; it was not only forgetfulness, it was a feat of forgetfulness. He may have asked for them and been told that there were none. I do not think that is likely. It would have been a grave mistake if such a thing happened in this case, and one would have nothing more to say about the First Lord of the Treasury. He might in that case have been expected to ask why there were none, but further than that I could not push my criticism. There is a third alternative which I mention only to exclude, that the Prime Minister might have read these reports and have failed to appreciate their importance. That certainly would be an admission of incompetence greater than any charge I have dared to make. We have further to ask how it came that these reports were unknown to Ministers of such importance as the Prime Minister and others? They were sent, in the first instance, to the Colonial Office, and then to the War Office, with covering letters drawing attention to their contents and enforcing the gravity of the situation.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I do not know whether it is of importance to the hon. Member's argument, but he must be entirely mistaken. There may be some particular report which came to the Colonial Office first, but reports of the Intelligence Officers go to the War Office.

*MR. ROBSON: I have no doubt whatever that the right hon. Gentleman is correct as to the first step, but that does not touch my argument at all, I only mention the subject for the purpose of saying that the letters accompanying the documents showed that the Colonial Office appreciated the gravity of the reports. The Colonial Secretary, however, might have consulted the First Lord of the Treasury or the Duke of Devonshire. Was that done at all? One cannot understand how, if there was anything like specific or explicit consultation between the Colonial Secretary and the First Lord of the Treasury, the First Lord of the Treasury should have remained as ignorant as he did of the information contained in the reports. But the ignorance—I do not use the word offensively, but I cannot think of another adequate to the occasion—of the First Lord of the Treasury with regard to the intentions of the Orange Free State was symptomatic, because we will see that the soldiers were kept waiting for the Government policy with regard to that Republic. The question of the Orange Free State never seems to have been put forward in any form so as to invite the collective consideration and action of the Cabinet. There seems to have been a remarkable silence and reserve between the Departments concerned with regard to this vital matter. How comes it that it was not more fully discussed between the Colonial Secretary and the First Lord of the Treasury? It might be said that the Colonial Secretary did not in those days habitually consult his colleagues. That is his way. That may be so. I am not going to criticise his action on any matter of that sort. That is a matter which affects the self-respect of his colleagues. But there is another point of view—the point of view of the colonies and this country. Remember that the Colonial Secretary was responsible for colonial defence. The Colonial Secretary, therefore, with the War Office, ought to have insisted on having adequate supplies of money in order to provide that that defence was not neglected. He could not possibly expect the Treasury to make adequate grants of money unless he did his best to make them realise exactly the state of affairs. No criticism except of a favourable character can be passed on the letters which the Colonial Secretary passed to the War Office. He points out that the colonies are not prepared to meet attack, and that if an attack was made there will be great humiliation and expense to the Empire. He was warned that there would be great loss of prestige to the Empire unless these warnings were heeded in due time. He knew the danger. Did that exhaust his duty or end his duty? I venture to submit it was only the beginning. The danger was pointed out in 1897 and again in 1898; they could not escape knowledge of it. These reports were made—whether to the

Colonial Office in the first instance or not, certainly they were brought to the knowledge of the Department. Therefore he knew the danger. I ask the House to consider whether, in the events that followed, he did his duty in making his colleagues realise the danger as it was communicated to him? Collective responsibility should have been invoked, for this question lay near the root of all other delay. Let me follow to a finish this story about the Orange Free State. We see at a very much later stage—in 1899—General Buller begins to grumble about the delay of the Government in making up their minds. He was informally appointed in June, 1899, when he was at Aldershot, a busy man and engaged in his duties as Commander there. His formal appointment was not made till 9th October—two days before the outbreak of the war. This is what he said in that interval—

> "I thought the question of the Orange Free State should be settled, and that until we could make a plan of campaign we could not get on. I was always grumbling to Wolseley about it. I was always told to leave the Orange Free State out of account."

Lord Lansdowne says that he did not tell him that, and I am quite sure that we accept Lord Lansdowne's word as to the best of his knowledge and as likely to be correct. But he never told General Buller to take the Orange Free State into account. And remember, almost contemporaneous with General Buller's informal appointment was the resolution of the Orange Free State Raad, which made it perfectly clear that we would have to fight the Orange Free State if we entered into hostilities with the Transvaal. Therefore he was not told the plans of the Government. What are the concluding dates on this point? There was a report in June, 1899, and on the 8th August a fresh memorandum from the Intelligence Department by Major Altham, pointing out—I need not read it; it was the same in substance—the danger that lay in our path in regard to the Orange Free State, and the urgent importance of deciding at once what the English policy in regard to the Orange Free State should be. No action is taken until at last we get to the 23rd September. On that day General Buller says he was "suddenly told he might put forward his views as to the route" to be taken. War broke out on 11th October; and on 25th September there appears, so far as the evidence is concerned, the first glimpse of a Cabinet consultation on this subject. A Minute is laid before the Cabinet by Lord Lansdowne, in which he says—

> "The question of the Orange Free State ought, I think, now to be faced without further delay."

So that after three years of inexplicable and inexcusable delay we get at last this decision; and even then war had been thought inevitable for at least three weeks. In another part of the evidence Lord Lansdowne was asked when he thought war inevitable, and he said 5th September. Now we turn from this statement of facts which may be excused—we may be overwhelmed with rhetoric, but these facts cannot be denied. We turn from that to the Ministerial defence. That Ministerial defence appears to be put forward by the Prime Minister in the Hotel Cecil in November last. I venture to say that rarely—never in the history of this country—has any Ministerial speech excited such deep, universal, and bitter resentment among all ranks of the English Army as that speech. The Prime Minister began by saying that—

> "The root of every complaint was that we under-rated the military task before us."

What he means by "we" will be seen in a succeeding extract. He continues—

> "All the so-called failures of the war arose out of that miscalculation."

and—

> "The impression left on many gentlemen after reading the Report is that the War Office authorities had not taken advantage of the information given by the Intelligence Department, and that if they had thought a little more about their plan of campaign that miscalculation might have been avoided. Personally" (says the First Lord of the Treasury), "I differ from that."

One does not wonder that he should differ from that. Mark what the right hon. Gentleman says. Here is a charge made against the Government of not having made up their minds on a political question in order that the soldiers might set to work to study the military question—

> "Observe," (he says), "that in so saying I am offering a defence not for the Government but for their military advisers."

and—

> "We thought the soldiers were better judges than ourselves."

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Hear, hear!

*MR. ROBSON: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham says "Hear, hear." Well, if he says that he thought the soldiers were better judges than himself he should have followed their advice. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman thought the soldiers were better judges than himself. The First Lord of the Treasury continued—

> "I mean to do my best to defend them."

Then this very remarkable defender goes on to speak of "the error the soldiers made." He says—

> "That they made the error common to all regular forces 'of undervaluing men not organised as a regular army. The mistake is in the first place one of which the whole British military profession were alike guilty, if guilty be the word.'"

I think "guilty" is the word; but not as applied to the British Army. Let us consider the Prime Minister's action in saying that he has defended the Army. He is directly charged with making a serious blunder, and he turns to his military advisers and says—"I will not go into the dock, but if you go in I will defend you." That is a very ingenious method of defence, and one which this House should very carefully consider. Of course we know that in effect all Ministers are responsible for their advisers; and we know that that responsibility is disregarded by the House and the country if it can be shown that Ministers have been misled by their advisers. Now can that be shown here? Let me take the advice they got. First of all we have the Intelligence Department. In the beginning of 1897, as the result of the Jameson Raid, Sir J. Ardagh said that they ought to increase the South African garrison by 20,000 men. That advice was not taken. Then the Intelligence Department goes on to warn them in 1897 and 1898 and tells them precisely the forces that ought to be sent out. In April, 1897, the Intelligence Department advised the Colonial Office that there ought to be at least three regiments of cavalry and two batteries of artillery. The Colonial Office communicates that advice to the War Office. That advice is considered by the Colonial Secretary and by his colleagues, and Lord Lansdowne points out that it would cost half a million of money, and he says—

> "The matter was discussed by Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Lansdowne with colleagues and the expense was thought greater than was justified by the circumstances."

So only £200,000 was given, including a sum of £36,000 already spent. But he adds—

> "This would not be a mobile force and it could make no pretence of anticipating the Boers at the numerous points indicated by Sir John Ardagh."

So that you have the Intelligence Department and the soldiers warning the Government at the earliest possible date and indicating the necessity of what no doubt was a serious force. I am not going to argue here how the serious political situation had been brought about; but here you have the Government saying—"No, the expense is too great, and instead of £500,000 we cut it down to £200,000, and even that is to include £36,000 you have already spent." That was in 1897. The garrison was substantially increased in 1897 and slightly diminished in 1898. In the latter year the warnings began again to the Colonial Office and the War Office, and there was some small provision of regimental transport, but nothing further was done.

We now take the soldiers. Lord Wolseley began in June, 1898, to warn them and suggested that the Government should set about unobtrusive preparations and that they should send out certain transport which would be unnoticed. Lord Wolseley also recommended the immediate mobilisation of an army corps and a cavalry division of 35,000 men on Salisbury Plain. Of course that was a very serious step, but he suggested that colour might be given to it as being a part of our ordinary military operations. It had long been thought desirable that we should have an experimental mobilisation of an army corps, and he thought that even if such an excuse were not believed, why then at least the mobilisation would have a wholesome moral effect on the Boers. I only call attention to these facts to point out what the soldiers thought of the situation. That was in June. On the 7th July, Lord Wolseley returned to the fray. In the recommendations which he made in his June Memorandum was one that contingents should be invited to co-operate with us from Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. I think he is entitled to the credit of that. In July he gets urgent, and says that he would recommend at a very early date the despatch of 10,000 men. He also recommended the Government to commence the purchase of ponies. That was a very practical recommendation. How much was lost by its having been neglected? He also said it would be advisable to get a transport corps ready, and that if there were mobilisation it would greatly increase the effectiveness of our force in the field. He followed these recommendations up with subsequent recommendations about buying ponies, carts, mules, and wagons. Anyone can see that in June and July of 1899 the military advisers of the Government did not under-rate the task before them. So far from under-rating it, they put it as being one of such magnitude that it was thought by the Government to be out of all reason. They were afraid because of political considerations to follow the advice of the soldiers; and these are the very Ministers who are now seeking to throw unmerited blame for the disasters of the war on the soldiers.

What happened in July? By way of showing how urgent the situation was, the Boers sent 100 cases of ammunition into the Orange Free State, and rifles and ammunition were landed at Port Elizabeth for the Orange Free State and sent on by Mr. Schreiner. These were public facts; and why in face of them were not Lord Wolseley's recommendations adopted? What excuse can the Government give? It might be said—and it is an excuse to which I would listen with the greatest deference—that it was very desirable not to make provocative preparations. That is in general circumstances a sound excuse. It would never do to interfere with the course of peaceful diplomacy by sending out an armed force if it was desired to have any fruitful results from that diplomacy. But remember in adopting that line and leaving your frontiers unprotected in order not to be provocative you must keep your diplomacy in accord. But so far from this being anything like a valid excuse, the Government as a fact did send out more men in August. After all these warnings they got as far as to send out 1,744 men to defend our borders against attack. Everybody knew that such a force was ludicrously inadequate; but it was sent out, according to the admission of the Government, in order to strengthen their diplomacy. That is an end of all the talk of keeping back reinforcements lest it might seem provocative. You sent out 1,700 men; but Lord Wolseley and the War Office were making great efforts to get more. I think Lord Lansdowne offered a battalion for Natal, and then he said they could only have half a battalion, and all this time our borders were lying absolutely undefended. There was some arrangement made in July, not involving any substantial expenditure, for supplying transport duties, but the 10,000 men Lord Wolseley asked for, and asked for at once, were not even ordered until the 8th of September. On the 18th August—I am following the dates, as that may be better than arguing in general terms—Lord Wolseley wrote again urging the despatch of 10,000 men, and saying that it would cost £500,000 but that it was well worth it. He pointed out that the Transvaal continued to make preparations for war. In August it is only fair to mention that there were certain hopeful intervals in the negotiations, but these intervals were very short, and were practically closed on the 21st when the terms which Mr. Kruger attached to his proposals became known to the Government, because they were regarded by the Government as wholly inadmissible. On the 24th August Lord Wolseley wrote a Memorandum to which I invite the attention of the House. He said—

> "At this moment we are not locally prepared for war, so if it comes under present circumstances we shall surrender the initiative to Kruger, and in no recent case would that initiative be more likely to injure our national prestige."

That was sent to the Colonial Office, and on the 26th August we had from the then Colonial Secretary a speech which I am sure the House will not forget. He used in it the metaphor about the squeezed sponge. Remember what the situation was at the time that speech was made by the Minister responsible for colonial defence, who had been told that our colonies were unprepared to meet an attack, and moreover, that if any such attack were made it would be disastrous, not merely to our soldiers but also to our Imperial prestige. He was told also that our enemy was well armed, well mounted, and resolute to defend his national existence by force of arms, yet on the 26th August we have the then Colonial Secretary making a speech in the highest degree provocative and almost certain to precipitate a situation full of peril to ourselves. We have him flouting the commonsense advice of the soldiers, and remember it was the soldiers who were the men of business of the situation. They knew the burden of responsibility that would fall upon them, and not only that, but their very lives were at stake, as well as the honour of the Army, and consequently they were entitled to be considered, and we had a right to expect that a Minister would not precipitate and provoke war by a speech of that character. Soldiers by no means object to a firm front, but they want a front made firm by preparation, not a paper front consisting of provocative speeches. The public were eager for war—they thought that speech was the speech of a man of action, but they did not know that behind all this platform energy there were the greatest administrative omissions, and they did not know that the colleagues of the then Colonial Secretary had actually been left for years in blank ignorance of the elementary dangers of the situation. They did not know that by this very speech, and speeches like it, the soldiers were being prevented from getting time for which they were vainly asking. What right had the Colonial Secretary or any other Minister, in view of the warnings from the soldiers, to precipitate the situation against them and to force the pace at a time when they were asking of diplomacy that it should be carefully moderate?

See what followed. One cannot help wishing that instead of hectoring the Boers the right hon. Gentleman had hectored his colleagues, or that even without hectoring them he had given them a little more information. On the 5th September a very important minute was received from Sir Redvers Buller in which he said—

> "There must be some period at which the military and diplomatic forces are brought into line."

There was a diplomatic force at work here which it was very difficult to bring into line.

> "Before diplomacy," he added, "proceeds to an ultimatum the military should be in a position to enforce it."

What an astounding statement to make to this Government. It had never occurred to them. The War Office did not know how fast diplomacy was moving. Then General Buller added—

> "We must know the line on which we are to advance,"

And he said that if they were to take the Natal route 50,000 men would be required, leaving the Orange Free State out of account. That was before our disasters, which greatly increased the magnitude of our task. No soldier contemplated such a delay in the preparations as would allow the enemy to take the initiative against which Lord Wolseley warned us, nor were the military authorities made aware that a force would be required not only for the defeat but the annexation of the Transvaal, and on these differences as to the amount of men, you have General Buller's message which he sends direct to the Prime Minister. On the same day he sends one to Lord Wolseley, and there he seems to speak of the order that is to be adopted. He says—

> "Early in July I suggested to Lord Lansdowne that the officers commanding in South Africa should be invited to say what troops they required to enable them to protect our Colonies from invasion by the Orange Free State or the Transvaal. So far as I know this has not been done."

Who was the officer Commanding-in-Chief during the time? It was General Butler. What is the first thing that would suggest itself, not to a Cabinet Minister but to the man in the street, who is the final judge of appeal? That, at least, if you wanted to know the magnitude of your task you should write to the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa. He was not consulted at all, although I suppose he has fallen under the ban of the Prime Minister like the whole of the military service for whose miscalculation he suggests we are now suffering. Lord Wolseley's minute of the same day is—

> "First intimation that our negotiations have reached an acute stage from Buller."

Was this treating the soldiers fairly? Lord Wolseley then says—

> "Cannot we stave off hostilities for five or six weeks?"

That was on the 5th September. Any Parliamentarian would have told him that you cannot stave off hostilities, that there are other forces pushing the pace. And then he goes on to say—

> "We have committed one of the very greatest blunders in war, we have given our enemy the initiative."

Whose was the blunder which brought about our initial losses? Were the soldiers responsible? Is there a single Member of this House who does not recognise the sense of fairness in Lord Wolseley's minute about the initiative? That blunder and the failure to follow up that warning which was the root of our failure was a politician's blunder. It was the Cabinet's failure. What followed after this request for five or six weeks delay. There followed on the 8th of September a most important despatch which set out our proposals in their final form, with a minor indication that if they were not accepted there would be further steps taken which were not very obscurely veiled. One might call that despatch very nearly an ultimatum. That was three days after Lord Wolseley's request for five or six weeks more time. So that within three days of Lord Wolseley's request war was deliberately brought nearer. Lord Lansdowne said then he thought it was inevitable, and on that date 10,000 troops were ordered out. Lord Wolseley thought first of all 10,000 would be sufficient with one army corps. But, in advising only 10,000 men, he had in view the rapid mobilisation of an army corps. Ten thousand men with the rapid mobilisation and despatch of an army corps is a very different thing to 10,000 men sent unsupported. Lord Lansdowne says Lord Wolseley pledged his word that the borders of the colonies were now safe until the arrival of reinforcements, but Lord Wolseley was never asked as to this by the Commissioners, and although I do not doubt Lord Lansdowne's word, I think too much has been made of that. But did the 10,000 get out there before the outbreak of war? Not completely.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing): Yes, they were, the hon. Gentleman is confusing the Indian troops with the 10,000. The Indian troops were there before the outbreak of the war.

*MR. ROBSON: I am not confusing anything. There were out of the 10,000, 5,600 who came from India. The rest came from the Mediterranean and home ports. The date of the arrival of the troops which came from India were between the 5th and the 13th October, and the troops from the Mediterranean and home ports between the 17th and 30th. The battle of Elandslaagte was fought on the 21st, and the war broke out on the 11th. But even supposing they were there before, they were not at the front, but at Durban. So that the arrivals go on right up to the 30th October, after some of the most vital battles had been fought. To what extent the troops were delayed after arrival in getting to the front I am not expert enough to say but Durban is a long way from the front. They ought to have been sent out when the general at the front could make good dispositions of them, but you have them arriving after the date when one of our most successful generals tells you 5,000 men might have changed the whole aspect of the war. I am quite indifferent, if it can be shown that these men were in South Africa on such a date, if it cannot be shown that they were at the front fit for service.

Now I take the question of the army corps. Very few facts indeed will be enough to show how the matter stands. It was asked for in June, and passed over through July, August, and September. It was never ordered until the 7th October. It took four months to prepare, and its arrival in South Africa was not completed till after our worst defeats. It might have been prepared in three months with the expenditure of one million of money, but the money required for the army corps was not obtained until 22nd September, nineteen days before the war broke out, and even when the money was provided it was not the whole amount but £600,000. The whole of the money was not sanctioned until the 29th. Is that fair to Lord Wolseley? It is not fair when you consider the burden of responsibility cast upon him. I do not blame the Treasury. I think anyone who goes through this evidence will rise from it with an increased feeling of respect for that Department. The Treasury are the properly constituted guardians of the public purse, and there is no case throughout all the evidence of the Treasury being responsible for any niggard treatment when they had been made acquainted with the danger of the situation. But the Treasury did not know much about the danger. That has been my complaint against the then Colonial Secretary, that he did not invite or compel the collective action of his colleagues so that they would have put before the Treasury representations which would have secured more prompt and generous expenditure. That finishes all I have to say with regard to Lord Wolseley, and I have only a word to add in reference to two other soldiers, who, I think, ought to have something said for them. The first is General Buller. General Buller made one recommendation after another. On 5th July he said—

> "You should strengthen the garrisons to the extent that the local authority there think sufficient."

That was not done. The local authority—General Butler—was not consulted, General Penn-Symons is said to have been consulted and to have recommended some small addition, but he was killed, and therefore we have not heard his evidence on the point. The next recommendation made by General Buller is, "Make up your mind as to the route." The third was, "Commence mobilisation." Not one of those three heads of advice was carried out by the Government so far as General Buller was concerned.

Then as to General Butler. A more remarkable circumstance than that connected with the name of General Butler is hard to imagine. He was the officer commanding-in-chief there; he knew the theatre of operations; he had been requested in December, 1898, to draw up a local scheme of defence, and he had done it. It was not a scheme of defence adequate to meet invasion. No request of that sort was ever made to General Butler or anybody else in South Africa, he was simply asked to formulate a scheme of defence upon existing conditions and with the materials then in South Africa. That is the ordinary method. Colonial governors and generals are not allowed to frame schemes of defence as if they had an unlimited command of troops; they have to frame their schemes according to the troops at their command—to cut their coat according to their cloth. He was never asked to make a considered estimate as to what force would be required in view of the contingencies of war and annexation which were then appearing on the horizon. Why he was not asked I do not inquire. He told the Commission that in conversation with his staff he had often expressed the opinion that 50,000 or 100,000 men would be required to deal adequately with the South African situation. It is a thousand pities the Government did not ascertain his opinion and the grounds for it.

These are the facts. I need not add to them by rhetoric; they speak for themselves. But I would add this word of warning. Are these Ministers fit to be chosen as the Ministers by whom even our commerce, and trade, and industry are to be turned into sub-departments of the War Office—because that is what we have got to expect. I hope the incompetence and neglect which is now made clear will not be allowed to pass without the English people and this House profiting by it. It is perfectly idle for us to listen to such a story as the Commissioners have unfolded and say, "Oh, let bygones be bygones." That will not do. We see already from the new proposals for the reconstruction of the War Office that you cannot let bygones of this sort be bygones. The Prime Minister who knew nothing about the Orange Free State is now to be almost Commander-in-Chief, and the Ministers who have proved themselves so negligent and reckless in dealing with Imperial peace are now to be invited to deal on War Office principles and methods with the industry and subsistence of the English people. Let us take care that the negligence which has been disclosed in one Department is not allowed a free hand to operate in all Departments. I beg to move.

*Dr. **MACNAMARA** (Camberwell, N.): I should have been glad if I could have seconded this Amendment from the Government Benches, because then I should have escaped any charge of partisanship. But I can honestly disclaim any Party motive, as the matter involves the gravest national and patriotic issues, and I feel with my hon. and learned friend that if we pass over the defects which have been disclosed our future as a nation is sealed. We cannot afford to let bygones be bygones. The Secretary of State for War, speaking at Liverpool on 21st January last, said—

> "Some people may interest themselves in assigning the particular responsibility for what is good or for what is evil under the circumstances which are commented upon in that Report. I do not myself take a very lively interest in that task of distributing the responsibility. In the first place, I do not think really that the public at large very much care. They are very sorry it happened, but I think the thing they care about least is to go back now to the question of responsibility."

I think the right hon. Gentleman is entirely wrong. The public do care about fixing the responsibility. The Prime Minister much more accurately summed up the situation when he said on November 27th last—

> "What is the view at the present moment of the man in the street. . . . I think his view is that the recent war and the Commission which has sat upon the war have shown, at all events, if they have nothing else, that before the war there was culpable negligence, and that during the war there was a deplorable breakdown."

That is exactly what the man in the street does say, and with great justice. He canno tfail to remember that 25,000 of his sons and brothers were either killed in action or died of wounds or disease; that another 25,000 have come home broken in health and constitution to be a burden to themselves and their relatives for all time; and that of those 50,000 a very large number were time-expired reservists, who before the war broke out had left the colours, entered into civil occupations, and had wives and families dependent upon them for support. Moreover, he thoroughly agrees with the finding of the Commission on page 57 where it says—

> "It certainly appears now that with a greater amount of forethought in arrangements generally, in the provision of stores and equipment, and with the addition of perhaps another Brigade, the situation in Natal might have been so strengthened that the whole course of the war must have been altered."

I ask Members of the House to carry their memories back to the dark opening days of January, 1900. The war had been raging for three months; 6,000 British troops lay dead on the fields of Glencoe, Belmont, Graspan, Modder River, Stormberg, Magersfontein, and Colenso; Mafeking, Ladysmith and Kimberley were invested, and the people in this country were filled with surprise, disappointment, and despondency. They were asking one another how it was that we did not know the enormous character of the Boer preparations; and, above all, with regard to the investment of Ladysmith, they were asking one another, "How is it the Government was not advised of the possession by the Boers of the Long Tom guns which outclassed our guns every time?" The Prime Minister at the close of that dark week addressed his constituents, and his first answer to the criticisms was that he did not think the Boers would fight. His words were—

> "If we were wrong in thinking war improbable, we erred with the great mass of opinion instructed on South African affairs."

The same position was taken up by the late Colonial Secretary. Let us see if we comprehend how the matter stands. My hon. and learned friend might with advantage have gone into greater detail with regard to the remarkable statement of the Intelligence Division. Lieut.-General Sir W. G. Nicholson handed in this statement—

> "The Intelligence Division prepared and submitted during years 1896–99 reports concerning—
>
> (*a*) The military preparations of the Boers, including their armaments and forts.
>
> (*b*) The number of fighting men the Boers would place in the field at the commencement of hostilities.
>
> (*c*) The political and military relations existing between the South African Republic and the Free State.
>
> (*d*) The offensive plans of the Boers and the probability that Natal and Kimberley would form their objectives.
>
> The Intelligence Division urged repeatedly, from a military point of view, the expediency of defensive preparations in South Africa."

Then I read later on—

> "A memorandum written by Sir John Ardagh in October, 1896, entitled 'The Transvaal Boers from a military point of view' examined the existing situation in South Africa. It pointed out that the South African Republic was spending that year

£2,350,000 on military preparations, including the provision of artillery, rifles, ammunition, and fortifications, 'that this large expenditure can have no other explanation than an anticipation of war or an intention of aggressions against this country and its supremacy in South Africa.'"

That was in 1896. During the whole of 1896–97–98–99, practically weekly, despatches giving the most precise descriptions of the Boer forces, were coming home from South Africa. I am sorry the late Colonial Secretary is not in his place, because he challenged the statement that they were sent direct to the Colonial Office. I think he must have been in error there, because the great bulk of them are headed: "Sir A. Milner to Mr. Chamberlain." They are too voluminous to go into in detail, but one of them before me is worth reading.

Here is the substance of what Mr. Greene said on 7th February, 1898—

"I am told that there are now 105,000 rifles in the magazine at Pretoria, independent of stock in district magazines, and it is therefore difficult to understand how any further supplies can possibly be necessary. It is, however, clear that the Government do not share this view, for they recently dispatched an order to Messrs. Kynoch for 8,000 rifles, as reported in my secret dispatch of the 16th ult., and I am told that they now propose to place another order for arms with Messrs. Webley of Birmingham, a member of that firm to be invited to come out here and enter into a contract. Moreover, the Government are, I hear, prepared to give orders for the latest improvements in field artillery, and quick-firing guns—the orders for artillery to go to Germany, and those for small arms to Birmingham."

That is a characteristic despatch, and the despatches in 1896, 1897, 1898, and 1899 are full of statements of that nature. I am taking no evidence that has been challenged or contradicted, or that has in any way been impugned in the course of this Commission. Take the evidence of Sir William Butler. In question 13617 Viscount Esher asks Sir William Butler—

"What was the essence, in one sentence, of the whole of your advice to the Government?"

And his reply was—

"Following the close of the Bloemfontein Conference, I sent a series of telegrams and despatches to the War Office, in which I extended to the utmost limits of official language my warnings of what war with the Dutch Republics and the Dutch race generally in South Africa would mean. I think I am within the meaning of those communications when I aver that the gravity of the warnings therein given could not easily have been greater."

I turn now to Vice-Admiral Harris, who was in command at the Cape in 1889–90 He was asked by the Chairman the following questions and gives the following answers—

"In 1899, were any preparations made for the war on its outbreak?—From a naval point of view, yes.

"18959. At what date were those preparations made?—About August I began to assemble the ships in my squadron and put them all through a thorough course of docking and repair in readiness for any emergency.

"18960. Was that on instructions from home?—No, I did it on my own initiative, on what I imagined was coming. Of course, I was in consultation with Lord Milner as well.

"18961. But there were no instructions from home?—There were no instructions from home until immediately before the outbreak of the war.

"18962. What preliminary knowledge then had you of the matter?—It was a matter of very common conversation in Cape Town that the Boers were preparing for war. That was in June; and on July I was shooting near Port Elizabeth and met several English farmers of that district who told me that they were absolutely certain from what they knew of their Dutch colleagues that they were preparing for war. Following that up again I went up the River Maputa, on a shooting expedition nominally, but for another purpose really, and there I came across a Dutch farmer named Kotse, who travelled constantly in the Orange River State and the Transvaal, and he asked to speak to me privately. He said to me, 'Well, Admiral, I may tell you this in confidence. The Boers are certain to make war directly the grass comes in October.' I said, 'What is your reason?' And he said, 'I travel about from farmhouse to farmhouse, and they all tell me war is coming.' I naturally made a note of that and telegraphed it to Lord Milner."

I turn from Vice-Admiral Harris to Sir Andrew Noble, the Chairman of Sir William Armstrong, Whitworth and Co. On page 484 of the same volume of evidence he says—

"Naturally, I heard a good deal from Continental makers of artillery and from other sources of what was going on in the Transvaal; but I believe that information was open to almost everyone who cared to take an interest in the subject. Having, moreover, served in South Africa myself, I knew something of the country and I saw the authorities at the War Office, and pointed out that the guns that were being imported into the Transvaal could be intended to be used against no country except this country."

And later on he says—

> "I had known, certainly for three years, of the preparations going on, and I had supposed, perhaps ignorantly, that the same information was at the disposal of the Cabinet."

And then Sir George Goldie says to him—

> "If that information was at the disposal of the Cabinet, do you think they ought to have made some further preparations earlier than at the time at which you spoke? Sir Andrew Noble replied: That was what I pressed."

Then the Chairman said to Sir John Ardagh on page 213 —

> "I think we had it in the statement from the Intelligence Division that the Secretary of State for the Colonies, having had reports communicated to him, expressed his acknowledgments of their value on two occasions in 1897?—Yes, the Intelligence Department was in very constant communication with the Colonial Office, in fact, it always is, but at that time more so than usual.
>
> 5047. So that the Government, so far as your responsibility were fully informed of the view is concerned, that you took of the position in South Africa?—I think I may say that they were quite fully informed."

Now let me take one extract from Lord Lansdowne. The Chairman asked him the following question—

> "21101. So that the Cabinet were aware, as is brought out in these papers, that the Boers were making warlike preparations which could only be intended for war with this country as early as 1898 at any rate?—Lord Lansdowne's reply is: Certainly."

In the Report itself, paragraph 56, page 30, it is recorded—

> "The consideration of the official records and the relative evidence sufficiently establishes the main fact that for at least three years before the outbreak of the war the Intelligence Department of the War Office had been fully aware of the warlike preparations in the Republics, and had recognised that the only object of these preparations could be to provide for hostilities with the British Government. If then the outbreak of war found us unprepared, it is necessary to discriminate between the causes which contributed to unpreparedness."

What I cannot understand is how, with the information at their disposal, the Prime Minister and the late Colonial Secretary clung to the last moment to the belief that the Boers did not mean business, and did not mean to fight.

Let me go back now to the Prime Minister's speech of 8th January, 1900. The first statement he made was that he did not think the Boers would fight, and his second assertion was, that if they did fight preparations had been made on a scale sufficient to meet any forces that were likely to be arrayed against us in the field, according to our military advisers. The Prime Minister said—

> "Looking back impartially, I say that the steps we took were, in the state of our knowledge, sufficient steps."

That justifies me in saying that the Prime Minister's view was that if the Boers were to fight the preparations were on a scale consistent with the description of the forces given by the military advisers. At the Hotel Cecil last November the Prime Minister said—

> "It was in the fact that the task before us was proved to be far greater than any critic, military or civilian, had ever suggested that what are now called the deplorable War Office blunders really have their origin. I am not going to make the smallest apology, or attempt the smallest excuse, for anything that went wrong in the war."

That was the second defence. At the outbreak of the war everybody war astonished at the nature of the was preparations, and particularly at the range and capacity of the Boer big guns. The late Lord Salisbury was asked in January, 1900, in the House of Lords, how it was he did not know that the Boers had these quick-firing and big guns, and he replied—

> "The guns were generally introduced in boilers and locomotives, and the munitions of war were introduced in piano cases and tubs. We had no power of search, we had no power of knowing what munitions of war were sent in. We know it now; we have the best reasons for knowing it. But that we knew it to the extent to which it existed in June last I entirely deny."

Lord Salisbury's "June last" is the month of June, 1899; and this is the date of the compilation of that marvellous handbook by Sir John Ardagh, which has already been referred to and which tabulated in the most specific and detailed way, and with extraordinary exactitude, the whole of the Boer armaments and the number of men they would be likely to put in the field. Take the big guns. With the accuracy of a trade prospectus there is a description given of the Long Toms, the Krupps, the Howitzers, the Nordenfeldts and the Hotchkisses. That hand-book states that the Boers had 107 big guns, and all of them are described most accurately. It appears from the papers captured from the Boers after the war, that in September, 1899, they really had 99 big guns, and the hand-book described them as having 107. The same work placed the Boers' machine guns at 34, and their papers show that they possessed 27. It placed small arms at 87,264, and the papers at the close of the war showed the total to be 96,661, and 12,000 of these were obsolete. Small arms ammunition was estimated in this hand-book at 33,000,000 rounds, while the papers captured showed that in September, 1899, the total was 33,050,000 rounds. I have never read of any case where the description has been so minutely accurate, and this hand-book was placed in the hands of the Government four months before war broke out. This hand-book said that the Boers could place in the field 47,600 men, and *The Times* "History of the War" estimates the highest number of Boers ever in the field at one time at 45,000 men. The Report says nothing more than it should say when it states—

> "It will be seen from the above epitome of the "Military Notes" that the information given therein has been proved by after events to have been generally accurate, and that it sufficed to give a correct impression of the numerical strength, armament, and plans of the Boers."

I ask why did not the Ministers of the Cabinet make themselves more acquainted with the facts? Lord Lansdowne does not appear to have been very well acquainted with them. I see from Sir Ralph Knox's evidence that it was not mentioned at the debates of the War Office Council. The Prime Minister said—

> "We took such steps as in the state of our knowledge were sufficient."

I think that the state of the Government's knowledge might have been very much more complete. Again, in a speech on 8th January, 1900, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I do not believe it will ever be maintained that the army we have sent into the field is inadequately equipped with any of the modern requirements or any requirement which the progress of invention has shown to be necessary in the case of a modern army."

Now there are literally hundreds of expert contradictions of that statement. I take Lord Roberts. He says—

> "In the way of artillery we were considerably behind other European nations at the commencement of the war. It was not until German guns were placed in the hands of our artillery officers that they recognised how far the Germans were in advance of ourselves as to quick-firing guns."

I take Sir Henry Brackenbury who says—

> "We had no quick-firing guns in South Africa until we sent out some 4·7 guns, and the Navy sent up their 4·7 quick-firing guns also and 12-pounder quick-firing guns."

I take Sir Ralph Knox—

> "I do not think we sometimes take the trouble to find what the improvements are, otherwise we would never have gone to South Africa with the guns we had."

I take General Plumer—

> "The guns I had up to the relief of Mafeking were of various and mostly of old patterns, and were ineffective. We had seven guns and twelve machine guns; out of seven guns three only were efficient."

I take one point that has come up in the debate this afternoon. The Prime Minister said at the Hotel Cecil that the Government thought soldiers were the best advisers. Therefore, the argument was that if things went wrong, the military advisers of the Government should be blamed. Well, I quote only one of the Government's military advisers—Sir William Butler—a man who, I think, has been very badly treated. After the Bloemfontein Conference he said—

> "The Boers will fight to the last man if you menace their independence."

That has turned out to be very true. In another part of his evidence he says that he warned the Government that the Boer women and children would help. That also turned out to be pretty true. How was he treated? He was recalled. He says he was ridiculed and vilified. That was treating the soldier as the best adviser in regard to these matters. I need not go into Lord Wolseley's statement that reinforcements were necessary, and the Colonial Secretary's statement that no reinforcements were required at that time. That is another example, I suppose, of treating the soldiers as the better judges.

I ask the House now to remember the circumstances of 21st June, 1895. The Liberal Administration had on the specific advice of the military experts allowed the supply of cordite to run very low, and hon. Gentlemen opposite came down to the House in a state of high indignation that we should have been left short of cordite. I make no complaint of that. I state the fact. That was at a time of profound peace. There was happily no war cloud on the horizon. The present Secretary for Ireland was Under-Secretary for War in 1898–1900. He gave vent to an entirely unexceptionable statement on the shortage of cordite. He said—

> "If we were overwhelmed by some national disaster, and it was due to any extent to neglect in the supply of ammunition, the Adjutant-General might not be shot, but the Minister of War would be held responsible for betraying the country."

That is a statement with which I associate myself. The Liberal Administration was put out on the shortage of cordite at a time of profound peace. A Conservative Government came in pledged to strengthen the national defences, and to perfect a great Department of State. I see from a statement made by the Prime Minister in 1895, after the Government was reconstituted that—

> "No abler body of men were ever at the head of the Imperial Departments of the State than those who have recently been appointed."

I should think that he must have got rid of most of them recently. The Conservative Government came to power highly indignant that there should have been a shortage of cordite. Where do we find ourselves at the outbreak of the great Boer War, about the nature of which the Government had been warned for three years?

Sir Henry Brackenbury says—

> "On taking up the appointment of Director-General of Ordnance in February last, I commenced an inquiry into the condition of our armaments and reserve of guns, ammunition, stores, and clothing; and I should have been able to report fully before this, had not the whole energies of my Department been absorbed by the war in South Africa. That war has now disclosed a situation as regards armaments, and reserves of guns, ammunition, stores and clothing, and as regards the power of output of material of war in emergency, which is, in my opinion, full of peril to the Empire. That is after seven years of the Government which came into power pledged to put these things straight."

Sir Henry Brackenbury in his evidence says—

> "We had in reserve the material of only one horse-artillery battery. . . . We had only material for eleven 15-pounder batteries."

This is a statement of affairs in December, 1899, but at a later date we got into a worse condition. Sir Henry Brackenbury says—

> "Then of gun ammunition we had only a reserve of 200 rounds per gun for each horse and field and mountain gun and howitzer, in addition to the 300 rounds which were with the batteries; and the whole of this reserve was absorbed by South Africa long before 15th December. . . . Naval orders for ammunition had to be held in abeyance from the beginning of October. . . . We borrowed ammunition from the Navy, and we borrowed ammunition from the Government of India, and yet I was unable to meet Sir Redvers Buller's demands for 5-inch howitzer ammunition and 7-pounder ammunition until a fortnight after they should have been complied with."

I take one point from the evidence of Major Sir Henry Colville. He says—

> "On the second day at Magersfontein, G Battery, R.H.A., had only six rounds per gun left, and the Field Battery about twelve. I believe that at that date there was not another round left in Cape Colony."

Sir Henry Brackenbury further says—

> "It caused me the deepest anxiety as to what would take place in the event of a war in which both Navy and Army were engaged, for if in this war, in which only the land forces were engaged, we had, in order to keep up supplies, to borrow ammunition from the Navy, what would happen if the Army and Navy were both to be engaged? It would be impossible to meet the demands for ammunition under the conditions then existing."

Then there is the pitiable story of the small arms ammunition, 66,000,000 rounds. When a shot was fired with that ammunition, the bullet stripped and a coating of nickel and lead was left in the grooving, so that, as Sir Henry Brackenbury says—

> "If there was a second load, you were apt to get an accident—a blow back in the breech."

He advised the Secretary for War to withdraw the whole of the 66,000,000 rounds as being ineffective for the purposes of war. He says—

> "We were driven to great straits at one time because we had actually got reduced in this country to two or three boxes of Mark II ammunition, so that if we had had to go to war with a European Power we should have had to fight them with expanding bullets."

Take it any way you like it is the same terrible story of breakdown.

I shall only mention one other point. Take the case of the 25,000 Lee-Enfields which were supplied to the reservists, the men of whom we were so proud. They were men who had left the colours and gone back into civil life. At the call of duty they left wives and families and sprang to arms to a man. Each man was armed with a new pattern Lee-Enfield. These Lee-Enfields were so sighted that the best and truest shot was bound at 1,000 yards to place his shot wide of the mark. The whole matter is very well summed up by Viscount Esher— —

> "The condition in 1899, as disclosed in Sir H. Brackenbury's memorandum, of our armaments, of our fortresses, of the Clothing Department, of the transport, of the Army Medical Corps, of the system of remounts, shows that either the Secretary of State was culpable of neglect, or that he was in ignorance of the facts."

If the Secretary of State was ignorant of the facts, his ignorance was culpable. I confess that I feel very strongly about all this. It was my privilege to be born and brought up in the barracks of a British regiment. I am proud to be able to speak of myself as the son of a man who fought at Crimea as a private soldier. The earliest lessons I learned were the bitterest lessons I shall ever learn. They referred to the sufferings and hardships which were inflicted on the men who fought in the Crimean War, owing in too many cases to what Lord Esher calls culpable negligence. It was said that this sort of thing could never occur again after Russell's letters to *The Times*, and the inquiries ordered by the House of Commons. I do not claim that the soldiers suffered as severely in South Africa as in the Crimea. It could not be so. There have been fifty years of advance in the means of communication, and fifty years of newspaper progress and the Press is read in every cottage home. But I say that if there had been no such improvement in communications and in the Press, things would have been just as bad in South Africa as in the Crimea. I do not say things were so bad from the point of view of the soldier. Here is the final Report of the Select Committee of this House on the condition of the British Army in the Crimea, of which Mr. Roebuck was chairman—

> "The Cabinet appear to have been confident of success."

That is the first comment.

> "At the date of the expedition to the East no reserve was provided at home adequate to the undertaking."

That is the second comment. The Secretary for War, the Duke of Newcastle, found himself—

> "imperfectly acquainted with the best mode of exercising his authority over the subordinate Departments, and these Departments were not officially informed of their relative position, or of their new duties towards the Minister for War."

Take another extract—

> "The Cabinet, according to the statement of Ministers, was in darkness."

Take another statement—

> "Your Committee must express their dissatisfaction with the administration of the contract system under the Ordnance Department."

And take the final paragraph from the Report, which shows that the South African Report is a hideous plagiarism of the Crimean Report—

> "The administration which ordered that expedition hoped and expected that it would be immediately successful, and as they did not foresee the probability of a protracted struggle they made no provision for a winter campaign; what was planned and undertaken without sufficient information was conducted without sufficient care or forethought. This conduct on the part of the Administration was the first and chief cause of the calamities which befel our Army."

Now, here we are again, fifty years after, in the same position. The Report of to-day is merely a hideous plagiarism on the Report of fifty years ago. When the Government came down to the House on 20th October, 1899, they asked that supplies should be voted for the South African War. The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave a promise that the Estimates had been prepared with the "utmost possible accuracy and care." First of all, the House was asked to make provision for 35,000 men, and the Under-Secretary for War stated that that would be the—

> "Superior limit to the margin for which we might be called upon to draw."

Then on 21st October the Chancellor of the Exchequer asked for £10,000,000 for the war which was to be over in four months. It was to be all over by 31st M rch, 1900. [Cries of "Oh, oh" from the GOVERNMENT Benches]. Oh, excuse me. The Chancellor of the

Exchequer asked for a Vote up to 31st March, late in October, and he said they had every reason to expect that the war would be over within the limit of time that the money was asked for. I call that four months. There is a good deal of new arithmetic about nowadays. Now, the four months became thirty-three months and the £10,000,000 became £222,974,000, and the 35,000 men became 448,435. I cannot help feeling that a great deal of the cost, duration, and magnitude of the war was the result of negligence and mismanagement; and that many a gallant lad's bones lie whitening on the South African veldt, and many a gallant lass is committed to a life of penury and toil to keep her children out of the workhouse, because of that negligence and mismanagement. It is because feeling that as I do I am bound by my conscience to second this Motion.

Amendment proposed—

> "At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But humbly represent to Your Majesty that the facts now made known in regard to the preparations for and conduct of the recent war in South Africa, and particularly the evidence taken by Your Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into those matters and their Report thereon, disclose grave negligence and mismanagement on the part of Your Majesty's Ministers, whereby the duration, magnitude, and cost of the war were greatly increased.'"—(*Mr. Robson.*)

Question proposed, "That these words be there added."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, towards the conclusion of his remarks drew a parallel between the state of affairs in the Crimea and the state of affairs in the first months of the South African War. It is true he added some words of mitigation, but in substance he believes himself, and would have this House believe, that there was some parallel to be drawn. There was none. When I come to that part of my argument I shall be able to show from the Report of the Commission that, so far as the finding of the Army is concerned, those who were responsible for that expedition stand acquitted, or justified in asking for acquittal, at the hands of this House. But in order not to leave that without giving some immediate reply, I will take an authority who may be accepted, I think, even by the hon. Member, as justification—I mean, Lord Wolseley. Lord Wolseley served in the Crimea, and he was competent to advise on matters of that kind. Lord Lansdowne in his evidence cites Lord Wolseley, and says—

> "I am inclined to believe that Lord Wolseley was not far off the mark when he said in that minute of January, 1900, that the army which we sent to South Africa was a better found and a better equipped army than had ever been sent from these shores before."

I take another particular instance which the hon. Member suggests. Perhaps I may lead up to his remarks on guns and armaments by reminding the House of a very sound constitutional dictum I laid down on 21st June, 1895—namely, that the Government are responsible in these matters. I say so. I would call to mind something else I once said in this House. The hon. Member has laboured at great length his point regarding the information supplied by the Intelligence Department, and more particularly in respect of the guns. I made that point myself exactly four years ago in this House. Speaking on 1st February, 1900, I paid a compliment and just tribute to the exactness of the information which had been supplied by the Intelligence Department. Very well, the hon. Member asks us how it comes that Cabinet Ministers used words which seemed to mean that the Boers had armaments far in excess of those described. Well, the country believed that at the time. We had newspaper reports that went to prove that our guns were actually inferior to the guns of the Boers, that our guns were bad, that the guns of the Boers were much better, and that they were relatively more numerous. The hon. Member quoted Lord Roberts; the Commission quoted Lord Roberts. [HON. MEMBERS: Read it.] I will read it if you like. Lord Roberts says—

> "Our experiences in South Africa have shown us that in the way of military *matériel* we were considerably behind other European nations at the commencement of the late war. Our field-gun, though a good serviceable weapon, was wanting both in range and rapidity of fire, whilst the fact of the enemy employing heavy field artillery against us at

> the commencement of hostilities placed us in a difficulty which we could not have avoided without calling on the sister service for the assistance of naval guns."

What is the next line of that Report—

> "Notwithstanding this opinion, it would, we think, be unjust to say that the field armament prepared by the Ordnance Department was inferior to that which was in use by other great nations, or that there was a deficiency in the number of guns, though there was undoubtedly a deficiency in the reserve."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Does the right hon. Gentleman himself agree with the first line of that sentence ?

MR. WYNDHAM: Notwithstanding this statement ? No. [Laughter from the OPPOSITION Benches.] I do not disagree, and I do not agree; and I can tell the hon. Members who laughed why. Because I do not intend to copy them and to constitute myself another Commission in place of the one which has sat, and to select everything which suits my case, just as they have selected out of those volumes of evidence everything which suits theirs. I say you appeal to Cæsar and to Cæsar you shall go. There is the Report. By that we are ready to stand or fall. I think the line which the speakers have taken, and the interruptions with which they marked my very modest quotation from the finding, and not from the evidence, accounts for the phrase which I admit caught my eye in the Amendment proposed by the hon. and learned Member—

> "Humbly to represent to Your Majesty that the facts now made known in regard to the preparations for and conduct of the recent war in South Africa, and particularly the evidence taken."

It is particularly in the evidence that they revel during these proceedings—in a selection from the evidence. [DR. MACNAMARA: What about the sighting of the rifles ?] In order to conclude in the time allotted to me, I refer the hon. Member for a reply on the sighting of these rifles to a speech I made four years ago in this House. I approach the task of replying to the forcible and able speech of the hon. and learned Member with a feeling of distaste which almost amounts to repugnance. I share as fully as it can be shared in many quarters which support the Government, and which earnestly desire to see Army reform, a feeling of annoyance at any attempt of justification, even on my part, when I am dealing with errors, some of which were committed long, long ago, and I share the feelings of annoyance at anything which could be twisted into recrimination upon our part against the great and distinguished soldiers who have rendered such important services. I do not think the soldiers will thank the hon. Gentleman opposite for the line of defence he has taken to-night. Who has stated more frankly than Lord Wolseley that he and all of them had a great deal to learn from this war, and that every war has lessons to teach that could not be anticipated. But, supposing we wilfully neglected the advice of our advisers, what the House has been asked to do to-night is to pass a vote of want of confidence in this Government. The hon. Members opposite who moved and seconded the Amendment were quite frank on that point. They have painted the Government which was in office at the beginning of the war as black as they could. They painted it so black that they want the House now not to act on the maxim that "a devil you know is better than a devil you do not know." Now, if the House will bear with me, I think I can take up, point by point, this accusation and show that we have a pretty good case. I will be quite candid and I shall leave the decision to the impartial consideration of the House. I do not know why the hon. Members opposite did not go to the Report instead of to the evidence.

*DR. MACNAMARA: We did. Paragraphs 56 and 57 were read.

MR. WYNDHAM: I think they were the more bound to go to the Report, because the Commissioners themselves take account of the evidence in two ways. For one thing they discount—I use the word in no offensive sense—the value of some of the evidence on the ground that it was conflicting, and they refer to the evidence given by great soldiers on strategic problems, and say that the questions could not be determined unless you had a number of eye-witnesses on the spot. They also treat the evidence in another way. They cite *in extenso* a considerable section of Lord Lansdowne's evidence. I have hardly heard the mover or the seconder quote Lord Lansdowne during the course of their speeches, and yet his evidence is very pertinent. The length of that evidence, over 500 answers to questions, is no bar to the study of its purport, because it was very accurately and fairly summarised in a *précis* which appeared in *The Times* newspaper. I have yet to learn that *The Times* has been a very indulgent critic of Lord Lansdowne, and if you will not have the Report of the Commission because you do not think it sufficiently vindictive, perhaps you will take the views expressed in *The Times* on the evidence as given by Lord Lansdowne. But I appeal to the Report. Now, in considering this Report, I think we ought in all fairness to take note of two things. In the first place, the Commissioners pronounce themselves, I will not say incompetent, but not called upon, to declare judgment upon the diplomacy which preceded the war. They leave that out of account. In the next place, I would ask the House to consider that the terms of reference confined the investigation to the period ending with the fall of Pretoria, and therefore, when they complain that no more had been done in this or that direction, they omit a great many things which have been done since the fall of Pretoria. What we have to deal with now are things which ought to have been done before the war and which were not done. Take the point of diplomacy. The hon. Member for South Shields stated as one of his most formidable facts that Lord Wolseley had asked for the mobilisation of an army corps on Salisbury Plain in the month of June. That would have been a political act and not an act of military preparation. Surely it would have been a political act and not an act of military preparation. The hon. Member endeavoured to avoid that difficulty by stating that the Government had authorised the strengthening of the garrisons in South Africa in order to strengthen their diplomacy. Is there no distinction to be made between sending the number of troops stated by your advisers to be necessary to protect your frontiers against invasion and taking steps which could only be taken as contemplating invasion on a colossal scale? The diplomatic argument turns on the minute written by Lord Lansdowne on 12th August, 1899. In that minute he stated all the steps which must be taken in order to place a force in a condition to march in South Africa, and the step which would take the longest time—namely, three months—was the collection in South Africa of land transport. Will anybody say now that such a step ought to have been taken between the Bloemfontein Conference at the end of May and the rupture or cessation of diplomatic efforts towards the beginning of September? Such an act would have made it plain to the Boers and the whole world that we intended to invade them.

The hon. Member made another point, by the way. He asked, "Did you tell your soldiers you meant to annex the Transvaal?" What is the meaning of that remark? That you should conclude the war on terms? On what terms? The only terms offered were that we should evacuate the country and acknowledge what we had always denied—namely, to treat the Transvaal as a Sovereign and independent State. When a great country such as Great Britain has been provoked to war by the invasion of her own territory, you cannot suspend the war by making terms of the only character which would have brought that war to a conclusion. If we go through the Report in that spirit—am I claiming too much of the House of Commons when I invite the august Assembly which appointed this tribunal to take some heed of its conclusions? I have made one point, which I will not make again—namely, that, though the Commissioners took notice of the advice given and the views held by many great soldiers on strategic problems, they found there was conflict of opinion among these distinguished officers, and they declined to pronounce any judgment on their views separately. There was a divergence of opinion as to the proper strategic route of advance. The great fundamental strategic problems of the war were decided in various ways by some of the greatest strategists of the day, and the Commissioners found that it was quite impossible to subject those opinions to any reliable test, and that the only course that was fair to all was to leave them on the same footing, to record them, and to leave them to the judgment of the reader. I am not here to prove that with a better organisation at the War Office you could not have had a plan of campaign which would have been a better plan. On the contrary, the Government are now suggesting that that course should be taken and have adopted it by their own executive act. What I do say is that, acting with the machinery of those days, and with the guidance given us—and I pass no reflection on that given by our distinguished soldiers—we do not stand condemned.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): What were the Committee of Defence doing?

MR. WYNDHAM: What is the relevance of that remark?

CAPTAIN NORTON: The Committee of Defence were the existing body at that time for dealing with questions of this nature.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Prime Minister put the Committee of Defence upon a basis which, as far as it goes, has earned the encomium of Lord Esher's Committee; but it was not within the duty of the Committee of Defence to decide on the strategical advance to be followed in the war. That was discussed as between Lord Lansdowne, the Secretary for War, Lord Wolseley, and Sir Redvers Buller, and you will find a triple minute, one by each, was written on 25th September, and yet the hon. and learned Member says that Sir Redvers Buller was complaining in October that proper attention was not paid to his views.

MR. ROBSON: Yes, on 25th September; but I pointed out that it was only on 23rd September Lord Lansdowne communicated to General Buller that he might put forward his views with regard to the route.

MR. WYNDHAM: I understood the hon. Member to say that Sir Redvers Buller took exception to the lateness of the date.

MR. ROBSON: So he did.

MR. WYNDHAM: My reply to that is that the principal adviser of Lord Lansdowne was Lord Wolseley, and if the hon. Member will turn to page 514, answer 21,234, in the evidence of Lord Lansdowne, he will find these words—

> "You will see in Lord Wolseley's minute of 8th June that he says:—'The general plan of campaign to be adopted is one that must thoroughly meet with the views of the general officer selected for the supreme command. There are, practically, only two lines of advance for an army into the Transvaal'; and in his later minute of 7th July, again, after considering the two lines of advance, he says that, 'should the Free State help the Transvaal against us, he presumes Sir Redvers Buller would not shrink from using the Free State as the line of advance upon Pretoria.'"

There is no substance or foundation in the charge that the soldiers were hampered by not being free to adopt either of those lines of advance, and again I would ask the House to accept the Report of the Commission. They say that the line of advance through the Orange Free State was considered to be the best. Well, it may or may not have been an over-refinement of political diplomacy on the part of the Government not to shake their fist at the Orange Free State before that was necessary. The hon. and learned Member has spun a long tissue of ingenious arguments, but what does it amount to? We knew there was a defensive alliance between the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, although the hon. and learned Member put it in words not familiar to me—he talked about the quarrel being just. It might have been an offensive and not a defensive alliance, but we should have been acting unwisely and wrongly if we had presumed that the Orange Free State would have backed up an unprovoked invasion of our territory. We may have believed they would, but the question was ought we to have acted as if we thought they would; and that question becomes very pertinent when upon the larger political problem—namely, the time it would take to get an efficient force in South Africa—we knew that three months must elapse, and that the first step to be taken—namely, the collection of transports—would proclaim to the whole world that we intended the invasion of South Africa. They may have been wrong, the Cabinet of that day—I was not a member of it, but I am here to defend Lord Lansdowne—but I think they were perfectly right. I think they would have offended the feelings of the civilised world if in June and July, when despatches were going from ourselves to the Transvaal Republic and back again, they had taken steps which could have only meant one thing, the intention on our part to crush that Republic. If it is argued that we are to be found guilty for having delayed preparations, I reply that I do not call that a delay of preparations. I call it the avoidance of a political act which would have put our country in the wrong, and would not, as a matter of fact, have really put us in a better position at an earlier date in South Africa.

Now take another finding of the Commission. The Commission point out on preparations that—

> "A distinction must be made between the preparedness of this country for any war in the year 1899 and the definite preparation made for the event of a war against one or both of the Dutch Republics in South Africa."

The hon. and learned Member said—

> "You must have known that these people were preparing for war, and obviously for war against no one but yourselves."

And he thinks that statement of fact disposes of the Prime Minister's speech in which he pointed out that we had in this country to be prepared for a varied number of emergencies. Suppose you had prepared for that war and had found yourselves on the eve of war, or of national disgrace—you can always avoid it by accepting that—with some other Power; not with a small Republic, but a great European Power. I do not wish to revive unhappy memories, but if anybody will cast his eye carefully back over some of the anxious months of 1898 he will see that the Government of the day would have been guilty of the greatest folly and crime if they had specialised their preparations for one contingency in South Africa instead of dealing with Imperial defence as a whole. I will tell hon. Gentlemen opposite that in the matter of general preparations we have a record of which we need not be ashamed. We ought not to glory in it, to take pride in it; we have made mistakes; we have not had the best system for the Army, nor a close enough correlation between the Army and Navy in Imperial defence; and until the present Prime Minister, whom we are asked by this Amendment to turn out of office, took the reins of the Defence Committee it was not as good an instrument as it is now. But with the opportunities at our disposal we have a record which I am not ashamed of comparing with the record of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I do not think, after the two speeches we have heard from the mover and seconder of the vote of non-confidence in the Government, that I shall be accused of adopting an unduly partisan tone when I say that on general preparations our record will stand examination and that theirs will not. When Mr. Stanhope was in power there was general preparation. During the Government of 1886 £21,500,000 was spent on the Navy—not wasted, but spent. I am not going to take up the small point about cordite; it is not a very important accusation, and there is a larger one; I say that during the years 1892–5, in the first place, the construction programme of the Navy was delayed, and, in the second place, nothing was added to the artillery of the Army.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: You mentioned Mr. Stanhope; Mr. Stanhope reduced the artillery.

MR. WYNDHAM: It is not denied that when we came into office in 1895 240 guns had been added to the field artillery arm; that was general preparation; but 364 guns were sent out during the first few months of the war, and if the war had occurred in 1895 instead of 1899 you would have had that inferiority in the numbers of your artillery which is unjustly charged now. But I may be asked, Why had not further progress been made? Because, when the Government came into office it put the Navy first, rightly, as we think, in the scheme of general preparation; and, apart from keeping up the Navy to the two-Power standard then adopted, it appointed a Commission to report on the armament of all the naval stations, and the first work of the Government was to re-arm all our naval stations in the world with breechloaders instead of muzzleloaders. Observe, these armaments are not pertinent, are not relative. You ought to have been preparing particularly for the war in South Africa. Would hon. Members opposite have supported the Government if we had said we must re-arm all the naval stations of the world at a cost of £7,000,000, and we must also prepare for war which may or may not happen in South Africa in four, five, or six years time, at an annual cost of an additional £2,000,000 a year? It is absurd to put forward that proposition. General preparation had been pushed, not as far as it could be and not under the best system for obtaining the best advice, but honestly and truly pushed to a standard which enabled us to conduct the war to a successful conclusion in spite of the miscalculation, for which we accept, responsibility—namely, that 75,000 men were enough. That was the miscalculation. I ask any one to read this Report impartially and to judge whether that is a miscalculation which would justify this Government in being turned out of office. I do not wish to indulge in recrimination, but I say they acted on the advice that was given them.

I take the other point, of which much may be made—namely, that the garrisons in South Africa prior to the landing of the field forces were insufficient for the defence of our Colonies against invasion. What is the finding of the Commission on that point? They quote the statement of Lord Lansdowne, which is as follows—

> "That the Government had received the assurance of their military advisers that the reinforcements sent to South Africa, together with those which could be added before a field force was despatched, would ensure the defence of the colonies from serious invasion by the Boers."

They then quote more than a page and a half of Lord Lansdowne's evidence, and refer to Lord Wolseley's evidence also, and state that—

> "Taken, as a whole, the evidence appears to support the position of the Government on this point—namely, that the steps taken to reinforce the troops in South Africa for defensive purposes, pending the arrival of the field force, were in accordance with the advice and requirements of their military advisers."

We stand or fall on this—namely, that politically we were right not to take a step three months before the first act of war in order, if possible, to win a diplomatic victory—in order, if possible, to avoid war. And we confess that we were responsible for believing that 75,000 men was the total necessary, and that the forces in South Africa prior to the advent of the field force could hold the passes until the field force arrived. If that shows such a lack of foresight and judgment, such a reckless want of consideration for the advice which reached us, then in heaven's name turn out the Government, and put in a Government which will do better. If not, let the acquittal, for it amounts to that, of the Commission stand. But when the Government is charged with not having made preparations for war, words are used which lead the people of this country to suppose that the supplies were inadequate in quantity and bad in quality. I believe that a noble Lord in another place, or elsewhere, made himself responsible for talking about paper boots or boots with paper soles. I will quote Lord Wolseley's dictum again, that no army was ever better equipped or better found, and I think there is a confusion in the minds of many as to the meaning of the words equipment and reserves. When we are told that there was a deficiency of reserves, that is perfectly true—there had been no policy in this country of accumulating large reserves; it was the settled policy of Government and Government, acting on the advice of those who were competent to advise them, that it was unwise to lock up a great deal of money in accumulated reserves, and it was believed that the manufacturers of this country could respond to any sudden stress. Well, as it turns out, that was an unfounded and bad policy, and when the first grave operation of the Government—namely, the re-armament of the coaling stations—was over, General Brackenbury was appointed by Lord Lansdowne for the specific purpose of going into this question of reserves. A Departmental Committee sat upon it, and the Treasury and the Government of the day allotted £10,500,000, in addition to the £7,000,000 for naval stations' armaments. So much for the reserves, and I say the first force, which was to be a force of 75,000 men, was properly equipped. So I run through the findings of the Commission. There is the finding on guns. Take rifles—

> "The supply of rifles during the war appears to have been adequate and satisfactory."

Take clothing—

> "The supply of clothing and boots in South Africa appears to have been satisfactory."

Saddlery and harness -

> "Was of good material and workmanship,"

better than the colonial. The Commission refer to the scandals about the remounts, and say they were very much exaggerated. I said I should be perfectly candid, and I will give the words of the Commissioners. They say—

> "The Commission, having considered the mass of evidence taken by the Court of Inquiry and in other investigations with regard to the proceedings of the Remounts Department and the Yeomanry Committee in the purchase of horses, were convinced that it would be a waste of time to investigate afresh the individual transactions and questions of personal conduct to which most of the attack is directed. The former inquiries have shown that there was much exaggeration in the allegations of scandal, and more especially so far as the Government Remount Department was concerned, and the Commission sees no reason to dissent from the judgment delivered by the Court of Inquiry acquitting General Truman from personal blame."

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeenshire, N.) rose, but Mr. WYNDHAM declined to give way.

MR. WYNDHAM: And yet it was made the occasion of an attack upon this gentleman that there had been corruption leading to improper horses being purchased in large numbers.

MR. PIRIE again rose, but Mr. WYNDHAM again declined to give way.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member must not persist in interrupting unless the right hon. Gentleman gives way.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have very little time. I do not deny for one moment that our arrangements for the Remount Department were totally inadequate, and my right hon. friend the late Secretary for War took steps during his period of office to carry out some much-needed, and, I believe, effective reforms. So it is also with regard to the supply of food and forage—

> "The evidence shows (the Commissioners say), that both in method of distribution and in quality the supply of food was one of the successful features of the South African War."

So it is of sea transport, and so it is on almost every head. Now, you may say these are all small points, but it is an acquittal against the charge which has been preferred. It is an acquittal against the charges that used to be made against the Government during the early months of the war, charges preferred even by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. Certain salient features emerge from this Report. In the first place, the Government made themselves responsible for the belief that 75,000 men was an adequate force. There is on that a finding against the Government, and we accept responsibility. But we ask impartial critics to read the Report and find in that acceptance of responsibility any justification for such an Amendment as has been moved. We say, in the second place, that for political considerations, which may have been valid or invalid— we all believe them still to be valid—we declined to take steps which would have advertised three months beforehand our intentions of going to war. We declined to take those steps when diplomatic negotiations were still in process, and when we trusted and believed that the Republics would not be guilty of an invasion of our territories. The third salient fact is that the interim defence provided for our own colonies was, in the opinion of our military advisers, adequate until the arrival of the field force. And the fourth salient feature is that, in the choice of a strategic line of advance, although there was no elaborate plan of campaign as there might be now when we have re-organised the War Office, we acted on the advice of the most distinguished military authorities. They all agreed in that advice, and there is not the slightest reason to believe that if they had been sitting together on the remodelled Army Council they would have given any other advice than that which, as a matter of fact, Lord Lansdowne followed. Then there is the quantity and quality of the provision of munitions of war. I feel that we need plead guilty only to having believed that 75,000 men were enough. We plead not guilty to the charge that these 75,000 men were not available or that they were not properly and adequately equipped.

We are arraigned by critics who think that they can impale us on the horns of a dilemma when they say that you ought either to prepare for war or to avoid war. Are you to prepare at all costs for every conceivable expedition? That is the view of one set of extremists. Are you to avoid war at all costs? That is the view of extremists at the opposite pole. We say that it is the duty of a reponsible Government to seek for some mean between those opposite views. We declare that, according to such guidance and with such facilities as were then available, that purpose was sought by the Government of the day and by their predecessors when Mr. Stanhope was Secretary for War. We say we have always sought to find the exact mean between the two—between war and diplomacy. But who are those who bring this charge against us? What was their diplomacy in South Africa, and what were their particular preparations in South Africa? Having receded from the Transvaal in 1881 and given a large measure of independence, what did they do in the year 1882? They contracted a treaty with Portugal to admit of the free transit of arms and munitions of war into the Transvaal Republic. And then, when you come to 1895, you get a beautiful balance of diplomacy and preparation for war. A despatch was written in the Colonial Office urging upon President Kruger for his acceptance a five years franchise, the very terms which were offered by Sir Alfred Milner, as he then was, at the Bloemfontein Conference in May, 1899, and what was the preparation for war? The garrison of South Africa consisted of two battalions! I know the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition thinks that that was an adequate garrison at the time. [OPPOSITION cries of "So it was" and "That was before the Jameson Raid."] Then why did you keep the despatch back? The right hon. Gentleman has made himself responsible for saying that they had an overwhelming superiority with these two battalions at Cape Town, but the despatch did not go. He has made it a charge against us that, without sufficient preparation, we allowed the quarrel to develop. They did not allow the quarrel to develop. They kept the despatch back, and it is very easy to adjust the balance between your diplomacy and your preparation for war if you put nothing, or next to nothing, in either scale. It is not easy to keep an exact balance. It is very difficult to adjust that balance if you have, as you ought to have, a regard for your world-wide responsibilities, and, in particular, a regard for your responsibilities to your colonial brethren, and if at the same time you have, as you ought to have, a regard for the taxpayers and the credit of this country. To say that with all our efforts towards general preparation, and with all these diplomatic reasons for not pushing on special preparations too far, we are to be condemned upon such an issue, is to prefer a charge which this House will cast to the winds. What is the question? Is the Prime Minister, who received a special encomium from Lord Esher's Committee, to continue his work of Army reform, or is he to be succeeded by the distinguished statesman whom hon. and right hon. Members opposite have unanimously agreed upon as more fitting to direct the organisation of the War Office?

SIR A. **HAYTER** (Walsall) said the right hon. Gentleman had appealed to the evidence of Lord Lansdowne. That being so, might he refer him to page 518 of the Blue-book, where the following passage would be found—

> "It is abundantly clear from Sir H. Brackenbury's report that we were not sufficiently prepared even for the equipment of the comparatively small force which we had always contemplated might be employed beyond the limits of this country. For the much larger force which we have found it necessary to employ our resources were absolutely and miserably inadequate. We had at the outset of the campaign to send troops abroad insufficiently supplied with clothes and equipments. If other complications supervened a catastrophe would have been inevitable."

The right hon. Gentlemen had appealed to Cæsar; to Cæsar, then, he should go. By that evidence Lord Lansdowne gave a complete contradiction to a great deal that the Chief

Secretary had been urging. Surely the right hon. Gentleman would also remember that according to the advice of the military authorities it then required an expenditure of £640,000 to complete the equipment of the First Army Corps. And were they to be told that soldiers, into whose hands were placed rifles which carried six inches to the right at 500 yards, were properly armed? or that cavalry with a reserve of eighty swords, and those of a kind perfectly useless for cavalry purposes, were efficiently equipped? It was impossible for Lord Wolseley to have taken these facts into consideration; the evidence of Lord Lansdowne was much more to be relied upon. The House owed a deep debt of gratitude to the hon. and learned Member for South Shields for the able and lucid speech in which he had brought this complicated question before them. He had been inclined to fear that the question had receded somewhat in public interest owing to the length of time which had elapsed since the events took place, to the time it had taken to compile the evidence, and to the appearance on the political horizon of a very large question which, like Aaron's rod, appeared to have swallowed up all others. Moreover, there had been the promise of reform in the War Office, and they had in that Department a Secretary of State enlisted on the side of Army reform. His hon. and learned friend had wisely made it his first object to place the saddle on the right horse, being not only anxious to exonerate the soldiers, but to allot the blame in the proper quarters. One quotation would show the opinion of the Royal Commission on this point—

> "It appears now that with a greater amount of forethought in arrangements generally, in the provision of stores and equipment, and with the addition perhaps of one brigade, the situation in Natal might have been so strengthened that the whole course of the war must have been altered." (Page 30.)

And again on page 28—

> "There can be no doubt now that the position in South Africa was dangerously weak."

In the judgment of Sir J. French, the addition to the force in Natal of a brigade of 5,000 men, would have turned the scale in the operations after Elandslaagte. It was difficult to form any conception of the difference in the whole course of the war which might have been the result. What was the situation in June, 1899? According to page 25 of the Report—

> "In June, 1899, it has been shown that an Army Corps and a Cavalry Division was designated as the force which would be required in the event of hostilities. The equipment of that force required, in the opinion of the Army Board, an outlay of £640,000. The minutes of the Army Board up to 22nd September, 1899, make it clear that in their opinion the main difficulty was the refusal of sanction for the expenditure of the money involved. It is, however, equally manifest from his minute of the 12th of August, that Lord Lansdowne, as Secretary of State, fully appreciated the extent of the deficiency, and the consequence of any delay in the grant of money, and that he brought the whole circumstances before his colleagues. The decision not to sanction expenditure was, therefore, taken by the Cabinet, though Lord Lansdowne, of course, does not dissociate himself from it."

Therefore the very thing which prevented the Army Corps going out was the refusal of the Cabinet to sanction the necessary expenditure. Nothing could be more clear than that it was not the fault of the soldiers. Sir H. Brackenbury had shown that nothing was done by the Secretary of State to remedy the state of affairs. From his evidence it appeared that—

> "The proceedings of the Army Board were full of instances of our asking at that time to be allowed to spend money in making preparations and of our being told we could not do it. It was perfectly clear that it was the decision of the Government that they would not spend money at that time in preparation for the despatch of an army corps."

And again—

> "We were equally refused money by the Secretary of State in the early stage to make any preparation for providing clothing for the First Army Corps, and nothing was done until the 22nd of September."

He could not conceive how that decision had been arrived at. The Cabinet must have known of the immense importations of arms and ammunition into the Transvaal; they must have known at the time of the Raid that we were very weak; they had the excellent reports of the Intelligence Division; and they knew that war was impending, because they sent to Sir Redvers Buller with the First Army Corps, and told him that when hostilities broke out he would be appointed to the command. It was, indeed, most melancholy to read of the want of preparation that obtained at that time. The question of the reserves in this country should not be lost sight of. The authorised reserve of cavalry swords was 6,000; the actual reserve, however, was 80, and they were described by Sir J. French as the worst that could possibly be used by any mounted troops, and by General Baden-Powell as a perfectly useless weapon. As to the rifles, the back-sight had been altered, and that was the cause of the divergence of the bullets, and it was a terrible blow at the commencement of the war that 200,000 rifles were useless. But who found that out? Not the War Office, but the unfortunate Yeomanry to whom they were served on the eve of going into the field. That, he contended, was a scandalous thing. Great use was made of machine guns, which were especially useful when acting with cavalry, but Sir H. Brackenbury stated that while the authorised number was 1,224, they had only 898, a deficiency of 326. And further—

> "We were driven to great straits for ammunition, because we had actually got reduced in this country to two or three boxes of Mark II. ammunition, so that if we had had to go to war with a European Power we should have had to fight them with expanding bullets."

He further stated—

> "Almost the whole of the supplies tell a similar tale. We had 500 sets of cavalry saddlery in reserve to meet the wear and tear of 16,000 sets with the troops, we had 10,000 sets of infantry accoutrements in reserve to meet the wear and tear of 364,000 sets, we had 1,700 sets of mule harness and we had to buy an equipment of 25,000 sets from the trade before 15th December."

Then Lord Lansdowne stated in evidence—

> "We had a quite insufficient reserve of horse and field artillery material, only one battery of horse artillery, and that converted to an experimental quick-firing system. The whole stock of field-gun ammunition was absorbed by demands from South Africa at an early stage. We borrowed from India and the Navy. We had only 500 sets of harness and 500 of Cavalry saddlery in reserve, we at once exhausted the reserve of infantry accoutrements, we had to borrow large guns from the Navy, machine guns from fortresses, boots and helmets from India, to buy 25,000 sets of mule harness, 17,000 tents and 900 marquees, we had no reserve of hospital equipment, the fiftieth of the picketing gear required, and a reserve of 80 swords."

That was from the evidence of Lord Lansdowne, a conclusive authority who cannot be mistaken.

With regard to the provision of men—

> "Colonel Lucas, who acted as Deputy-Adjutant General of the Imperial Yeomanry, stated that on several occasions, he urged upon the War Office, after the despatch of the first contingent that recruiting for the Imperial Yeomanry should not be stopped but the committee should be allowed to raise drafts to maintain the strength of the force. It was a mistake on the part of the War Office authorities to have declined to santion this. If the force first sent out had not been allowed to melt away the subsequent hurried and unsatisfactory raising of further contingents would not have been necessary."

The second contingent was raised by order in February, 1901. The privates were given 5s. a day, to the great disgust of their comrades in the first contingent, who were paid at cavalry rates, and had also to be raised to 5s. a day, like the Colonials. These men, when they arrived in South Africa, were absolutely untrained, and could neither shoot nor ride.

That was about the most extravagant expenditure in the war. Lord Methuen said of them—

> "It was not their fault, it was sending them out unprepared and not giving them a chance when they got to the country of getting into order, before they were in front of the enemy."

Sir B. Hamilton says of them—

> "The second lot of Yeomanry knew nothing at all, they did not know how to handle a rifle."

Sir C. Knox said of the same contingent—

> "They were very bad; I do not know where they were got, but they had no idea of riding, shooting, or anything else."

Colonel Crabbe said that—

> "They were absolutely ignorant of the rudiments of soldiering, and knew nothing about horses. Some of the officers were unfit and had to be sent home."

With regard to the officers he limited himself to the Militia. Lords Wolseley and Roberts and the Adjutant-General agreed that the Militia failed in the matter of an adequate number of well-trained officers. In the sixty-eight battalions warned for embarkation, there was a deficiency of 303 officers. One battalion was seventeen, another sixteen, and another fourteen officers short. The whole Militia force in 1899 was 624 officers short. The Inspector-General of the Auxiliary Forces between October, 1899, and April, 1900, gave away 407 Militia Commissions. He sent out young gentlemen with no training whatever, and knowing nothing. He took them straight from their families or from school and sent them out without even gazetting them. Naturally Lord Roberts found the greatest difference between Line and Militia on service, and could only employ the latter on lines of communication, and he referred to the great anxiety he felt in his communications being held by partially trained troops such as Militia and hastily raised Yeomanry. No doubt one of the great difficulties was the supply of trained officers. They could not pay a man for longer time than he served. Might they not utilise the Militia, increase largely the establishment, train an officer for three months and then one month yearly. They then would not need largely to increase the cadres of regiments, or pay men for twelve months while doing one month's duty, and yet they would get the Militia properly officered.

As to horses, there was less reason to speak of the terrible deficiencies of the remounts, as there had been more than one debate and more than one Committee upon it. But no one could pretend that an establishment to purchase only 2,500 horses a year was sufficient; nor could any excuse be found for not increasing the staff when they suddenly had to deal with an expenditure of £7,000,000 in a single year. All would agree with the finding of the Commission—

> "That the real complaint against the Remount Department does not so much relate to its purchase of horses during the war as to the fact that from first to last there was not the symptom of an idea in anyone who was responsible for its organisation that in time of war there would be necessity for its expansion."

In conclusion, he thought they were all indebted to his hon. and learned friend for the admirable manner in which he had brought the subject before the House.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

Sir A. Hayter.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [4th February] to Main Question [2nd February].

"That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

> "At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But humbly represent to Your Majesty that the facts now made known in regard to the preparations for and conduct of the recent war in South Africa, and particularly the evidence taken by Your Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into those matters and their Report thereon, disclose grave negligence and mismanagement on the part of Your Majesty's Ministers, whereby the duration, magnitude and cost of the war were greatly increased.'"—(*Mr. Robson.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*Mr. DUKE (Plymouth) said if it were possible for the Amendment to be a declaration of public necessity for the removal of the Government in order to promote the efficiency of the defensive forces of the Crown, there would be found a majority sufficiently public-spirited to prefer the efficiency of the forces to the continued existence of His Majesty's Government. But the powerful speech of Mr. Wyndham must have satisfied Members on both sides of the House that the efficiency of the Imperial forces did not require the removal of the Government. The objects of the Commission were to discover any inefficiency or defects in the administration of the Army, as disclosed by the war in South Africa, and to indicate their causes where possible. The Commissioners faithfully carried out those objects, and devoted their ability and industry to discovering inefficiency and defects, which they disclosed in an impartial Report. Their work would redound to the benefit of the public service if it was not defeated by partisan interference. They faithfully traced to their origin those mistakes which indicated inefficiency, and by which so much public humiliation was caused in the early stages of the war, but they had also, and to an extent which close study of the Report made quite clear, exonerated the advisers of the Crown and the members of the Government from culpability. In view of the finding of the Commission the speech of the hon. Member opposite was like a reiteration of the case for the prosecution after the verdict of acquittal had been given. It was founded upon isolated passages in the evidence—scraps had been selected, instances of inefficiency had been pieced together, and with an admirable adroitness, of which the House had had one or two instances that day, the blame of the whole matter had been laid at the doors of His Majesty's Administrators. He maintained that no Government in this country within the past century had contributed so much to the strengthening of the forces of the Crown—to the making of them efficient, to the provision of armaments and to the establishment of an intelligent system at headquarters—as this Government had. The business of the Administration in regard to the matters which came into question that day was the business of policy, and he protested against the notion that it was the duty of a Prime Minister or Secretary for War to go round sighting rifles, examining saddles, counting tents, or even to undertake the preparation of plans of campaign, or lines of strategic advance. A Government was to be judged by its conduct of public policy; a War Minister was bound to see that the Government had a force available to support the honour and determination of the country in such emergencies as arose. Upon those broad grounds it was impossible to support the Amendment. If hon. Members brought home to the Government every mistake and folly that was committed they might succeed upon the Amendment, but if the question was one of policy he ventured to say that the policy of the Government with regard to every material stage in the progress of the acts under discussion, was a policy approved by the country and one which not infrequently had been approved by right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen opposite.

A great deal had been said with regard to the conduct of the Government in not providing sufficient forces in South Africa when war was thought to be possible. He challenged any critic to show that the Government did not more than satisfy the demands that were made upon them. The advice given by Sir William Butler was that the war would be a costly and serious matter. The general thought, but apparently did not advise, that it would certainly require 50,000 or 60,000 men, and might require 80,000 or 100,000. And he predicted also that such a war would not be begun by the Boers. How completely that prediction had been falsified! Yet the Government was blamed because it was satisfied with the advice it had from the general at the Cape, the general in Natal, and its advisers in this country. His Majesty's Goverment may not have possessed a prophetic foresight. If they failed to send great forces to Africa in the summer of 1899 it was with a very excellent justification, for they were resolved that no act should be done on our part which should render war inevitable. Half the blame cast upon the Government was blame because in the summer of 1899 it did not mobilise an army corps. The justification for the position of this country at the outbreak of the war was that we had done nothing to provoke war. What would have been the attitude of hon. Gentlemen opposite if His Majesty's Government had in the summer of 1899 proposed to mobilise an army corps, or call out the Militia? On 28th July, 1899, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman said, in regard to preparations for the war, he saw nothing which established a case for armed intervention. What was censured at the time was not any slightness of preparation on the part of the Government, but their ostentation and excess. Before the Government was finally met by the hostility of the two Republics, the Government had been advised with regard to the force required. Various numbers were given; an expert said 40,000 men would be required, another 60,000. Now they were told in this House that the number of men the Government ought to have expected to send off was upwards of 400,000. They knew now, when the war was successfully ended, that the number of troops required for the task to be performed was about 250,000, but there was not a scintilla of evidence placed before the Commission to show that any responsible person before the commencement of the war suggested that anything approaching even 100,000 would be required. The force decided upon was larger than was advised by the experts. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, when the subject was discussed, was able to express a confident opinion as to the sufficiency of the forces sent to South Africa, and it was an idle thing at this time to say that he spoke without the knowledge of the facts he had now. He had such knowledge of the facts that he could speak with confidence and applaud the decision at which His Majesty's Government had arrived. The House did not know and did not need to know the exact quantity of facts which was required to give the right hon. Gentleman confidence in his opinion. What the right hon. Gentleman said with regard to the matter was contained in volume 75 of "Hansard of 1899." On 17th October, 1899, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I am glad that the Government are at least not falling into the error which has not infrequently been made by our countrymen in past times, and they are sending out, after some delay it is true, an ample force for the purpose of effectually prosecuting and concluding this enterprise."

That responsible utterance at a time of the most serious crisis should outweigh some of the criticisms now offered in defiance of the findings of the Royal Commission. Not only was that the view of the Opposition, that view was endorsed by Lord Roberts, who said that what the Army was suffering from when he got out to South Africa was not a deficiency in the number of men, but defective strategy. In those days also it was not the opinion of the Leader of the Opposition that the Government had failed in their duty as regarded equipment, for on 20th October, 1899, he said that for us in our particular position to be paying a great deal of money in continually keeping up a great establishment of transports solely for European or home purposes would be preposterous, and that it was shown by the fact that in this particular case we had already had to alter our wagons in order to suit the nature of the country in South Africa where they were to be used. Was it fair or beneficial to the country that what was regarded as reasonable and prudent in the time of crisis should now be condemned?

As to the wrong sighting of certain rifles, Lord Roberts in his evidence said it was discovered at a time when it made no practical difference. Being asked (Question 10,575) whether it practically made any difference, Lord Roberts replied, "No, I do not think it did." The Government record with regard to Army administration was one showing that they had done something and risked something, and he commended it to the consideration of hon. Gentlemen opposite who were now such severe critics after, in office, setting a bad example. The Government had taken account of the main recommendations of the Commission, and had dealt even with the internal economy of the War Office in the manner called for by its Report. The Government provoked this Report. They appointed a Commission to investigate the errors which had been made, and he was heartily thankful that they had investigated them. He therefore ventured to suggest that the Government deserved encouragement in the prosecution of the task of military reform to which they had committed themselves, and to which he hoped they would be enabled to devote their energies for years to come.

* SIR CHARLES DILKE said the hon. and learned Gentleman concluded his speech by declaring that the Government had condemned the War Office. If that was true it was some justification for the Motion now before the House. If it was true that the War Office had not yet been replaced, it was a curious commentary on the Prime Minister's speeches in which he stated that he had made the War Office perfect, while according to the hon. and learned Gentleman we were at present provided with no War Office at all. The hon. and learned Gentleman stated that

previous speakers did not stick to the Report of the Commission, and complained that they had gone outside of it and referred to the evidence. The doctrine that the evidence should not be referred to was one which they could not recognise on this side of the House. The hon. and learned Gentleman asked if judgment was going to be passed on the Government by the House, with regard to events which occurred years ago. Judgment had been passed on the Government by a Commission of which they themselves chose every member, and of which they prepared the reference, which was a matter of importance in the case of a Commission. It was a Commission so composed which had passed on the Government a verdict the hon. and learned Gentleman and the Chief Secretary for Ireland called a verdict of acquittal. He would endeavour to put before the House the reasons which made him think that the Report was such that it would be impossible for the House of Commons to pass it over in silence, and not to point the moral which the Report contained, for the sake of the Empire as a whole. He could not help feeling that the fact that there had been three Secretaries for War in so short a time in what the Prime Minister called the same Government was an eloquent comment on the disclosures which had been made. With regard to the claim that the Report of the Commission was an acquittal of the Government he did not think that was the opinion of the Prime Minister. Immediately after the Report was issued the right hon. Gentleman, addressing his constituents, said it had left a painful impression upon the public mind, and that in the opinion of what he called "my friend the man in the street," the Government had been tried and found utterly inefficient. Surely that was hardly a way to meet a verdict of acquittal. The Chief Secretary had waved the Party flag, and attempted to substitute for the real question before the country a purely Party issue. Upon this military question some of them had really tried to keep free from Party spirit and some of them had shown that. He felt from a perusal of the Report and of the evidence, from his knowledge of the circumstances which led up to it, from his recollection of the debates which took place after the unfortunate speeches of the Prime Minister, that it was incumbent upon all of them, for the sake of the nation, to support the judgment of the Royal Commission. If they passed over lightly such a Report as that dealing with facts, they should only deserve their fate if similar facts were to recur. It was a little ominous that some hon. Gentlemen were inclined to give a Party turn to the discussion. Perhaps that was natural and inevitable though unfortunate, and it seemed to him singularly unfair. It was a subject on which they had a collection of evidence by competent men admirably put before them, and it contained an enormous number of facts which it was essential to bear in mind for the future welfare of the country.

The Chief Secretary for Ireland began the Party portion of his speech by an allusion to the most considerable and most grave of all the findings of the Commission. It was on the subject of what he called the preparation for the war; and he asked—the question had already been asked in Party newspapers, and in the unfortunate speech of the Prime Minister in which he tried to defend the Cabinet on Party lines—would hon. Members opposite have supported war preparations? If the question meant would hon. Members who had consistently opposed the policy of Lord Milner have supported war measures to back up that policy of Lord Milner, of course they would not. That went without saying. But, was that Party taunt any answer whatever to the charges that had been made on the findings of the Royal Commission? Did it clear the Cabinet in any way? In protesting against the view that the Government ought to have sent larger reinforcements to South Africa, the right hon. Gentleman said that the civilised world would have condemned such a provocation. He doubted that. He thought the civilised world would have been more likely to condemn the making of inflammatory speeches which had been delivered when reinforcements were not sent. The provocation sending reinforcements and adequate transport would have been small indeed beside the provocation offered by the speeches to which he had referred. Another Party taunt which the Chief Secretary used was that in 1895 the right hon. Gentlemen who sat on these Benches had prepared a despatch on the franchise question which they had not sent to the Boer Government, and that at that time they had made no preparations for war, and that the garrison in South Africa was small. But he might point out that the Boer armaments had not been gathered at that time, and that their preparation for war, which had been so accurately described by the Intelligence Department, was caused by the Jameson Raid.

The Chief Secretary said that the Report of the Commission was a verdict of acquittal, and he should like therefore to ask the House to consider what exactly it was that the Commission had reported in regard, in the first place, to the main question of preparation and reinforcements. He was glad to see the right hon. Member for West Birmingham in his place, because it enabled him to quote a letter written by the then Secretary of State for War, Lord Lansdowne, in which he referred to a communication from the right hon. Gentleman which had not been published. On 20th August, Lord Lansdowne wrote from Ireland that the Colonial Secretary had written to him on 18th August, stating that "he saw no occasion for reinforcements." Now, it was on 22nd August that the Transvaal presented their five years franchise proposal, and the Secretary of State for War continued to see no necessity for reinforcements, because to that proposal the Government had "sent a reasoned reply" and "the negotiation was going on." But it was on the 26th August that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was made about "the sands running down" and that "we shall have to find other ways;" and, according to the evidence of the Secretary of State for War on the very same day, the Cabinet—or at least the majority of the Cabinet—had come to a decision that they "ought not to send further reinforcements." On 5th September the Secretary of State for War, Lord Lansdowne, came to the view that war was certain, and the Commander-in-Chief, knowing the state of our unpreparedness, wrote that he wished the Government to stave off war by diplomatic measures as the enemy was "in a position to take the offensive, and by striking the first blow to ensure the great advantage of winning the first round." That prophecy came exactly true, and it was the ground on which the Commission reported that the earlier sending of reinforcements would have changed the whole future course of the war, would have prevented the prolongation of the war, and would have saved an enormous sacrifice of life and treasure. The Commander-in-Chief in that prophecy did not stand by any means alone. The Intelligence Department's advice was exactly the same, and so was that of Sir William Butler about "temporising," in which he used, without previous communication, almost exactly the same words as the Commander-in-Chief. Let the House consider for a moment what would have been the effect of earlier action at that time. During the fatal week of December the troops were arriving largely too late to take any part in the operations, and the delay was caused by the Government holding their hand from 5th September, when even the peace members of the Cabinet came to the conclusion that war was certain, up to the 22nd and even 27th, 28th, and 29th September. Now, what were the words of the Report on that subject? What was this verdict of acquittal of which they had heard that night? The Commission found in those words—

> "With a greater amount of forethought . . . and with the addition of perhaps another brigade, the situation might have been so strengthened that the whole course of the war must have been altered."

That statement seemed to him not to be a verdict of acquittal, but a verdict of guilty on the main point.

The second most important point referred to by the Commission concerned the deficiency of stores. The Chief Secretary for Ireland did not make, at the same length as the Prime Minister, but he did make that night the old pot-and-kettle charge, a Party charge on this question of stores and equipment. In the unfortunate speech which the Prime Minister made to his constituents in Manchester in defending the Government after the Report came out, he attacked the Party on this side for deliberately starving the Army. He used these words—

> "When they (the Liberal Government) went out in 1895 and this Government came in, we set to work at once to bring up the Army to the standard which had been laid down by our Conservatives predecessors, and which had been abandoned . . . and which we were resolved to restore."

And then he quoted Mr. Stanhope. The Chief Secretary again quoted Mr. Stanhope. Well, he (Sir Charles Dilke) had already deprecated Party recrimination on this question. He had claimed for himself detachment from Party, but he confessed that he was sickened by these Party charges in regard to this question which was specially referred to in the Commission, and on which they had plain evidence in the Report itself, and the verdict given was as complete a verdict of guilty as was the verdict on the other point. The Prime Minister said that—

> "The professors of efficiency left the Army in the deplorable position in which it was in 1895."

But they knew that when Mr. Gladstone was in office in 1893, Mr. Stanhope said that the Army was in a very fine condition of efficiency; there was no falling off at all, and that—

> "The Army had never been more efficient or more thoroughly suitable for war than it then was. Our Army was better equipped than at any previous period."

In 1895 a similar statement was made by the Prime Minister, though the right hon. Gentleman now explained that his remarks applied to the Navy, which was not at that time mentioned at all; and the Chief Secretary did not refer to the Navy in that connection. At all events, the Prime Minister was in the same condition of delusion on this subject, and in regard to the evidence and Report of the Commission, as he was in regard to the Orange Free State. The Prime Minister at Manchester put first in his list of "Unionist Army reforms" these stores which had returned to the standard set up by Mr. Stanhope, and which had been destroyed by the harm done by the wretched Liberal Party from 1892 to 1895; and then the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "We brought up the whole reserves of ammunition and equipment."

And the Chief Secretary brought cheers from the other side when he spoke of "our record" on this subject. What were the words of the Report of the Royal Commission? The Commission reported—

> "A serious deficiency of stores and material required on the mobilisation of an army corps."

And yet they had been told that the equipment of two, and later of three, army corps was complete in every respect. Now the Chief Secretary for Ireland asked the House to very carefully read on that subject the most valuable evidence of Lord Lansdowne. They had read it. Lord Lansdowne admitted the charge to the full. He spoke of the "melancholy extent of our deficiencies," which he said was "full of peril to the Empire." And that was after they had returned to the Conservative standard, and made up all the deficiencies and raised the Army to a state in which it had never been before! Lord Lansdowne was specifically asked—

> "And do you think that deficiency of stores has been of long standing?"

And he said—

> "Yes, I think so."

Well, the Commission were not content with the complete judgment which they passed on this point in the words I have read. The Chief Secretary wanted hon. Members to stick to the Report of the Commission. Well, the Commission went on to mention specially Mr. Stanhope, and they printed for the first time Mr. Stanhope's Memorandum. And they say—

> "The state of things in no way corresponded to . . . Mr. Stanhope's Memorandum."

They found that there had not been that completeness of preparation under Mr. Stanhope for which the Chief Secretary vouched, and that instead of there being an improvement, there must have been very serious deterioration. The Commission went on to say that—

> "Some branches were barely strong enough for the equipment of two army corps."

And they specifically mentioned several points as to which the Government complained most unjustly that the House of Commons were responsible. The House of Commons had never done anything but good on these points. The Commission specifically pointed out many matters which his hon. friend the Member for West Aberdeenshire had brought before the House. The medical equipment was, they said, never anything like the equipment even for a single army corps. Well, that was complete proof, surely, without going into any evidence at all, and without raising any of those questions which the Chief Secretary said ought not to be raised—that the Report showed that the verdict of the Commission on the Government was not one of acquittal upon the main points, but was a condemnation on the two chief points which it was the bounden duty of the House to take notice of on this occasion in order to prevent a similar misfortune happening in the future.

There were other matters of deep interest, but not of first-class importance, on which their opinion was as unfavourable and as clear. For years past the Army reformers in the House, on both sides, had perpetually urged upon the Government, in season and out of season, down to the conclusion of the war itself, the defective state of the Intelligence Department. On that point, too, the finding of the Commission was dead against the Government. They found that the Intelligence Department was undermanned, and was not sufficient to grapple with a great war. The present Secretary for India made a speech to his constituents in October last, defending the War Office, when he said that their attacks on the Government were most unfair, because, he contended, everyone "ignored that large additions have been made" to the Department, and he said how wrong it was to make these attacks when Sir William Nicholson "was satisfied." What were the facts? Sir William was rewarded by being driven from the War Office. At all events Lord Lansdowne was not satisfied; he was apparently impressed by the war having shown the importance of the Intelligence Department; and he used these singular words—

> "One of the good results of the war will be that the importance of the Intelligence branch will receive greater recognition."

It certainly was the result of the war that the Commission had condemned the undermanning of the Department, and that that which they had been urging for years had been complied with. The hon. Member for Plymouth complained that they had waited till after these events to make their criticism; but they had brought the question before the House as soon as it was reported upon by the Commission. The Secretary of State for India, defending the War Office, said that the Government ought not to be blamed, because they had given Sir William Nicholson all he wanted. They had the evidence of Sir William Nicholson quoted in the Report, and it was the basis of a judgment against the Government in which it was stated that the Department was "undermanned." Sir William Nicholson said that his moderate proposal of 1901 was negatived by the Government on the ground of expense; and when he was asked what the expense was he said £3,000 a year. So that this country, which spent infinitely more on its Army than any other country, had refused the moderate proposal of Sir William Nicholson while waste was going on in other Departments. Up to March, 1903, Sir William Nicholson had totally failed to obtain the augmentations for which he had asked for his Department, and he succeeded only by the evidence he gave before the Commission. The Secretary of State for India said that it was most unfair to blame the Government on this point—most unfair, he supposed, of the Royal Commission—Sir William Nicholson won only on his evidence; and now he was probably to be sent away from the War Office.

There occurred during the debate a little passage of arms between the Chief Secretary and the seconder of this Motion. The Chief Secretary quoted the evidence of Lord Roberts about quick-firing guns and some words from the Report, and seemed to suggest to the House that the Commissioners understood the question better than Lord Roberts. He ventured to interrupt the Chief Secretary and asked him if he agreed with Lord

Roberts' statement that in quick-firing guns this country was altogether inferior to other Powers. The Chief Secretary did not answer; but he should like to press the question, because it was one of the points on which the Prime Minister had been as consistently misinformed as he was with regard to the attitude of the Orange State. The Prime Minister, defending the Government in January, 1900, went out of his way to deny that our Artillery had a worse gun than the French, for example. That matter was put to the test, because the French took their quick-firing gun to China at that very time, and some demonstrations of its value were given. The Prime Minister spoke at the Manchester Conservative Club on the 10th of January. On that occasion he was advised by someone to say that our guns compared favourably with any guns then used by any great State, and he went on to attack the critics and said no one had ever stated before that our guns were bad. The Chief Secretary knew at that time all the latest information on the subject, he knew very well that the statement of the Prime Minister was not the case, and he knew very well that Lord Roberts' statement was true, and that our guns failed deplorably in South Africa in quickness of fire. The Prussian "Military Considerations of the War in South Africa," a most valuable view of the war and a most important Supplement to the Report of the Royal Commission, described these guns as "old and old-fashioned. The English had only one battery which was quick-firing and the Boer artillery had 126 quick-firing guns." One gun which the Army still possessed was the Liberal gun of 1885. It was converted in 1892 merely from an action on one side to an action on the other, and the spade attachment was added in 1899. The Member for South Birmingham defended that gun in debate, but it was admitted by the Government in 1899 that it was hopelessly out of date. He was able to state without doubt that the German gun of commerce—the Krupp gun of 1901—which anyone could buy, was seven times as good as our gun, as it could fire seven rounds for every one fired by the British gun, yet he had quoted the amazing statement of the Prime Minister which was supplied to him, he did not know by whom. It was not a fact that when the present Secretary of State for War came to this House next month for money he would propose the very first Vote that had ever been proposed for quick-firing guns? Such statements of the Prime Minister were surely worthy of the attention of the House. It was universally admitted that the position of the Prime Minister in co-ordinating and deciding what share of increased taxation was to be allotted to each Department gave him a great say in such matters, but surely the House of Commons, which had to trust the Prime Minister, had a right to expect from him that he should keep himself aware of what his own military advisers were thinking on these questions, and that he should at least read the documents sent to him. His hon. and learned friend had made a weighty attack on the Prime Minister, but it was a very deserved and necessary attack, one painful, he knew, for his friend to make in the Prime Minister's absence. His hon. and learned friend devoted a considerable portion of his speech to the case of the Orange Free State, and it was necessary to bring it forward because soldier after soldier had pointed out what would happen. His hon. friend quoted one passage, but it was the whole burthen of the speech of the Prime Minister, who also used the following passage, which was perhaps more appropriate to this occasion because it contained one of those needless reflections on the military advisers of the Crown which had produced such a painful impression on the country. He spoke of—

> "What we did not know at the time, that the Orange Free State would throw all their forces into line with the Transvaal Republic."

Now the Chief Secretary said that everyone knew that. Why did not the Prime Minister know it? The Intelligence Department reported it month after month in the critical period before the war, but the Prime Minister did not know it, and finally, when the matter was brought before the House, he made the lamest of lame explanations. It was suggested that the Government only thought that young men of the Orange Free State would leave the State and take part in the war, and that the Orange State would not throw in its lot with the Transvaal. But it had been proved conclusively that the War Office was aware that the Orange State was being armed at the cost of the Transvaal, and that they were actually interchanging small bodies of regular troops. Those facts were brought to the attention of the Government in June and July, and was it not amazing that the Prime Minister should go out of his way to make these statements with regard to the action of the Orange Free State?

There was a secondary matter which was reported on by the Committee, and that was the question of mounted men. The Committee reported on this subject on three points, in two of which the Government were condemned. The Prime Minister at Manchester stated as one of the reasons why the Government could not have been adequately prepared for war, and why they were bound to make the failures they did in the early stages of the war, that for the first time in military warfare, they had an enemy wholly mounted and that that fact had not been adequately realised. The Prime Minister went on again to attack the military authorities, and he said that they "might ask much of their officers and Ministers, but they could not ask omniscience." But the officers had reported this very fact, the Intelligence Department had reported that the Boers would put 54,000 mounted infantry into the field, and the Prime Minister must have been ignorant of the facts which were brought before the House during the war when the accuracy of the statement was already suspected, a suspicion which was now confirmed by the Report. The Committee reported that it was necessary to increase the number of mounted men, and he could not help remembering in this connection that it was Mr. Stanhope who reduced the number of horses at the time he reduced the artillery and that that reduction was not made up for an immense period. The Committee specifically censured the Government upon the subject of the Remount Department, although that could not have been gathered by what the Chief Secretary said that evening. The Commission whitewashed the Remount Department and General Truman, but reported regarding the Government that no one had ever foreseen the simple necessity for the expansion of the Department in time of war. On the question of mounted men the Commission also censured the Government. Some of the Yeomanry officers opposite would remember the report of Colonel Lucas in which he said that drafts ought to have been sent out, but it was established by the Royal Commission that the Government failed to keep up the Yeomanry to its full strength, and that the war was prolonged because the report of Colonel Lucas was not acted on and drafts were not sent out. The Chief Secretary asked them to stick to the Report of the Commission, and, with one divergence, in order to support the seconder of the Amendment, he had stuck closely to the actual findings of the Report. The Government thought that they had been acquitted by the Royal Commission, but the Prime Minister himself admitted the miscalculations of the Government, and threw the whole blame on their military advisers. The Commission condemned the Government not the military advisers. The attack on the soldiers was a mean attack. Certainly the soldiers were not responsible for the condition of the stores which they had frequently reported to the Government; they were not responsible for the state of the Intelligence Department, or for the miscalculation of the Prime Minister as to the Orange Free State. So far as he knew the sole justification which the Government had for trying to throw the blame off their own shoulders and on the shoulders of the soldiers related to the question of numbers and to that alone, and on that point what the soldiers said was that they did not understand that they were entering on a war of conquest, which was a very different thing from an ordinar war. When the Government proclaimed a policy of destroying a nationality they provoked an amount of resistance of a character and continuity which needed different forces to cope with it. The soldiers with one accord declared that they were never told a war of conquest was intended. That was an important answer, and one of which notice ought to be taken by the House. The soldier who made the clearest statement to the Commission was Sir T. Kelly

Kenny, who in 16,923 put that view forward, and the Commission appeared to have accepted it as there was no attempt to rebut it. And yet Sir T. Kelly Kenny was taken by the Government themselves as the best man they could find for a "thinking department" of the War Office. In the face of that they could hardly deny the authority of such a witness on such a subject. The country and the House might congratulate themselves that, in all the circumstances disclosed by the Report, we got through the war as well as we did. The evidence which had been placed before the Commission by men of the greatest weight as to what occurred at the time of the investment of Ladysmith, and as to what would have happened if the Boers had then reached that measure of efficiency which they undoubtedly did attain in the later stages of the war, showed what a danger we had escaped in spite of the admitted miscalculation and neglected preparation of the Government. The Government had appealed from the evidence to the Report; he had endeavoured to keep to the Report and to show from it that the Commission appointed by the Government themselves had confirmed the charge which had been made.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): Mr. Speaker, I was going to apologise to the House for intervening at all in this debate, but I gather that the House considers, as I do, that the course which it has taken necessitates, at all events, a few words from me. I came down to the House under the impression that I was not personally—not exceptionally—concerned in the subject under discussion. But, nevertheless, I was induced to come down by certain prefatory, preliminary announcements which I had seen in the newspapers, rumours which I had heard, that the hon. Member for South Shields was intending a great deliverance, was going to bring to bear all his forensic eloquence, and, in a Motion to condemn the Government for military inefficiency, was going to demolish for ever the reputation of the ex-Colonial Secretary. And really I think there was some foundation for that, because although I do not think the observations of the hon. and learned Member were always relevant, yet I noticed throughout his lengthened speech a perpetual endeavour, an earnest desire, in all circumstances, at all times to lug in, somehow or other, King Charles's head, or the ex-Secretary of State's head, and to present it on a charger for the repudiation and derision of the House. That is a very bad precedent, and I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman to reconsider his action. Here for eight years the whole object of him and a great number of his colleagues has been to get rid of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Now they have got rid of him. Really, is it not rather hard that when, not forced by them, but voluntarily, I have yielded the office I once held with such pride and satisfaction, I should now be deprived of the immunities of a private Member? The whole object of the speech delivered by the hon. and learned Gentleman appeared to me, from first to last, in the most unnecessary, most unreasonable and illogical way, to lug me into matters in which, at all events, I was not principally concerned. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"] Oh, that was not the object. Well, what was it? I ask those who listened to the lengthened speech of an hour and a half which the hon. and learned Gentleman delivered, and in which he dealt with facts in an imaginative manner, from which he omitted, as it appeared to me, almost everything of importance—I ask hon. Gentlemen who listened to him, What was his object? Can it have been that the hon. and learned Gentleman was moved by strong patriotic feelings, and, recognising that a great war had come to an end and that it ought to convey lessons, had resolved to devote himself to the study of all the incidents of the campaign, and to try to point out for the benefit of his descendants, of his country, and of the Empire, what mistakes had been made and in what way we might on future occasions improve on past experience? Was that his patriotic intention? Will anybody believe for a moment who listened to him that he had that object in view? Does anybody believe that he cares one brass button [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"] about the lessons derived from the war? Not a bit of it!

Well, there was another object I thought he might have had. I can hardly believe it should have come from those Benches, but the whole course of his speech went to show that this war, which during the whole of the last five years the whole of the Opposition have been declaring was unnecessary, and might have been avoided, was an absolutely inevitable conflict. For my part I recognise most gratefully the result of his speech, but I do not believe that was his object. As I have said, the object appears to me to be to trump up a ridiculous indictment against my right hon. friend the Prime Minister, who is absent, fortunately for the hon. and learned Gentleman who attacked him, and against myself, who fortunately for myself am present. It is difficult to defend an absent man when he is attacked on the score of petty quotations picked out of I do not know how many speeches without their context—it is very difficult even for his nearest friend to defend him. Although I do not claim for myself that proud position, I claim that he has no truer friend. But in the course of the remarks of the hon. and learned Gentleman what was important was not what my right hon. friend has said, but the interpretation the hon. and learned Gentlemen chooses to put on it; and it is only my right hon. friend who could himself give the true and correct interpretation, although perhaps I might suggest something different from that which commended itself to his assailants.

For myself, so far as I was attacked in the matter, I do not shrink in the least from that corporate responsibility which belongs to every member of a Government; but I absolutely refuse to accept any special or exceptional responsibility beyond that general position. I was a member of the Government which prepared, or failed to prepare, for this war and the conduct of the war. [AN HON. MEMBER: Misconduct.] Well, at all events, we won the war, and no thanks to the hon. Gentlemen opposite. But, as I say, all those who were members of that Government accept that corporate responsibility, and some of us undoubtedly had a more special responsibility. Now what was my special responsibility other than that of any of my colleagues? In a sense, I was, on behalf of the Government, conducting negotiations, and it was my duty to keep my colleagues in full knowledge of all the negotiations that went on. I did so. The hon. and learned Gentleman invented Cabinet meetings, communications between colleagues, and declarations of colleagues, which did the greatest credit to his humorous imagination, but which had not the slightest foundation in fact. The communications between the members of the Government were complete, and the Government knew all that I knew in regard to these negotiations, and I will go a great deal further and say that there was nothing of substantial importance in connection with those negotiations which was not known also to the whole of this House and to the whole of the public. There were no secrets, the necessity did not arise, and, from day to day almost, in this House I was questioned, and I was glad enough to answer the questions addressed to me, as to the progress of the negotiations.

Now the Cabinet was aware of the progress of the negotiations, and it was the duty of the Cabinet to prepare for possibilities. There were two questions: What was the preparation to be and when was the preparation to be made, the amount of preparation and the time of preparation. Those are two very important things, and I am prepared to justify, to take the fullest responsibility both for the time and for the amount. What is the charge of the hon. and learned Gentleman? It is that we failed, that was how he began his speech, to provide for the defence of those of our colonies and possessions which we knew to be threatened. I could not help smiling when he came at last to his peroration. What was the conclusion, the moral, the thing he wished to impress on this House as the result of the crimes and iniquities he described as having been committed by the Government? I forget the exact words, the eloquent words, but the effect was that the Government which could have failed to provide for the defence of Natal and the Cape was unfitted to consider commercial questions. King Charles's head, Mr. Speaker! What a bathos! There was the object; it was to that conclusion that the whole of this great and eloquent oration tended. The Government were to be abused, and every possible fault was to be implied to them, in order that it might be proved to the satisfaction of the hon. and learned

Gentleman, and the other hon. Gentlemen who cheered him, that we were unfit to deal with commercial questions!

The questions were—Did we make preparation in time, did we make preparation sufficient, in all human calculation, in amount? Perhaps it will surprise the hon. and learned Gentleman, though it cannot surprise any of those who were present at the debates at the time of the Bloemfontein Conference, both before and subsequently, that we earnestly strove, and that we actually believed almost to the end in the possibility of a peaceful solution. By that you must judge our policy. If the hon. and learned Gentleman is going to tell us that he saw better than we did, that he knew the Boer was not to be trusted, that there was no possibility of coming to terms with him, that the issue was inevitable, and that we ought from the first to have taken up an active, violent, and hostile position—very well, I will say perhaps he was right. But that was not our view; honestly we believed that peace was possible, honestly we strove for it, and to a certain extent, undoubtedly, I admit it, that hampered our action, that hampered our preparations—hampered them both in regard to time and to amount. We had to keep two things in view. We had to keep in view in the first place the desirability and the importance of maintaining peace if peace were possible; we had at the same time to consider that we might fail, and that we ought to be prepared against the worst results of such a failure — that if war did come, against our wish, against our hope, almost against our belief, at any rate we should have as considerable a preparation as was consistent with our desire for peace.

I should have been glad to treat this matter absolutely in connection with the facts, or, at all events, with our separate view of the facts, and without any recrimination; but I cannot do that in the presence of a bitter, I might say almost malignant, speech such as that we have listened to. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"] Oh, yes; I am perfectly in the recollection of the House; that speech was not a mere ordinary political speech, it was a bitter speech, and an unnecessarily bitter speech [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"], and in face of a speech of that kind I cannot refrain from the natural and necessary recrimination.

I say we strove for peace. I believed, I repeat, that peace was possible, and I believe peace was rendered impossible by two things. In the first place, I believed—and let me say that this belief of mine was confirmed by all I heard when I visited those countries and had conversations with Boer and Briton alike—I believed that President Kruger was influenced by his hope and belief that he would receive assistance from foreign countries. I do not think he ever had any real reason for that belief, although I do know as a fact that persons whom he thought to be influential gave him encouragement in that belief. And, in the second place, he believed that, as he said himself in public, he could rely on the Opposition. From first to last in our negotiations we were hampered by the fact that President Kruger did not believe that this country was in earnest, and he believed that this Government, which represented the country, was bluffing, that when it came to the point it would retire, and that the people would not support it. How could he believe otherwise? How could he believe we were in earnest, when even in June, 1899—a favourite date with the hon. and learned Member—and in July, 1899—another favourite and critical date, when the hon. and learned Member says we ought to have known that war was inevitable—when, even at that time, the Leader of the Opposition was saying——

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Hear, hear!

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Wait a minute—was saying that there was nothing to justify "either warlike action or even military preparation."

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In what was there nothing to justify either war, or the prospect of war, or even military preparation? Let the right hon. Gentleman read the words. If his memory has failed him and he has not got the words, which probably he has not, because they would not suit his purpose [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh!"], I will remind him that I said that in the whole story of the Government, in the whole of the case which they put before the country, so far as we knew it, there was nothing to justify war or even military preparation.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman said all he now says. He has had a good deal to say with regard to this unfortunate expression of his. But he did not say what he says now in his first statement. His first statement was made at Ilford in June, 1899. He did not then say what he has now told us. He said it afterwards in explanation. I do not think the explanation made much difference; but in any case it came too late. I do not care, I do not know, what the right hon. Gentleman meant when he said that. It is not my business to interpret his mind. But I know what the effect of that was upon everybody who heard it, upon everybody who read it; what its effect was upon us, and what its effect was upon the Boers. When you say, two or three months before war is declared by the Boers, that there is no reason for military preparation—I do not care how you may explain it—the effect upon the Boers is that they think they may safely continue. I would like to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that he regretted that his words should have been misinterpreted by the Boers [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"], but, whether he says it or not, the fact remains the same, and I here say it to his face, as I have said it over and over again in the country. How, I say, do you expect that at this time, when we are told by the hon. and learned Member that war was inevitable, the Boers would meet our desire for a reasonable arrangement—and it was a reasonable arrangement, as the Opposition admitted at the time—how do you expect that, when they thought that, if they refused it, we should not make military preparations, or, if we did, we should be condemned by the Opposition, to the power and influence and importance of which they attached a great deal more importance than was necessary?

MR. ROBSON: I am sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but I did not say that war was inevitable. What I said was that it was inevitable that, if you fought the Transvaal, you would also have to fight the Orange Free State. It was the inevitability of war with the Orange Free State that I referred to.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: As a matter of courtesy I will answer the hon. and learned Gentleman, though I see no relevancy whatever in the interruption. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"] The hon. and learned Gentleman says that war was inevitable if you fought the Orange River Colony as well as the Transvaal. [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] What has that to do with it? [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"] Have I not rightly understood the hon. Gentleman?

MR. ROBSON: What I said was that it was inevitable that if you fought the Transvaal you would also have to fight the Orange Free State. When I was reproaching the Government for want of preparation I was reproaching them for want of preparation in reference to that contingency.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I will only say in answer to that explanation that I will deal with the question of the two States directly. It does not come in at this moment.

Now, Sir, what I last said was that the views expressed by the Opposition seriously interfered, in my opinion, with the success of our diplomatic efforts. We never had any success, and I will ask you to find a single South African who will deny this statement—we never had or could have any success with the Boers so long as they did not believe that we were in earnest. Now I appeal to the fairness of hon. Gentlemen opposite to admit that during the whole course of the Bloemfontein discussion, and even for some time afterwards, the despatches that I addressed to President Kruger met with their entire approbation. There was not, so far as I know, an adverse criticism of those despatches either in the House—certainly not by any person of representative authority—or in any of the organs of the Press. They were admitted to be moderate despatches; no complaint whatever was made of them. Then came the speech

—it is very ancient history—to which the hon. and learned Gentleman has referred again to-night—the speech which he described as a minatory speech, a provocative speech, and adjectives of that kind. Well, I never dispute adjectives. That is a matter of taste. What I wish to say is that I take the fullest responsibility for that speech; I made it deliberately, and, knowing all that I know now, if I had to go through exactly the same situation I should make a similar speech again. And I will say why. Owing to the circumstances to which I have referred, it became evident to me—I had sufficient evidence—that President Kruger did not believe we were in earnest, and I desired in the fewest words, with the least offence but at the same time with the utmost firmness, to point out to President Kruger that, as I believed, the British Government and the British nation were in earnest. Sir, I said the sands were running out. That was the expression which I used. Really if one's literature is to be examined with such careful criticism as has been applied to some of mine, who is there who can escape? But I took, I admit on the spur of the moment, an illustration which I did not mean to be offensive. What I did mean to say was that President Kruger was letting out drop by drop—that is to say, insignificant portions—reforms which were quite insufficient to meet the demands that were made upon him. I will not go back on, nor do I think it worth while to defend, that term. But the point that was of importance, that may be considered to have constituted a threat, was contained in the words "the sands are running out." Sir, they were running out. I do not care—it is not my expression—I am perfectly willing to accept the statement that I am the author of the new diplomacy. If so, the new diplomacy consists only in this, in endeavouring to make your opponents know and to make your friends know what you mean. I have never believed in the low cunning, as I think it to be, which characterised the diplomacy of centuries ago, in which the object was to deceive your opponent as to what it was you intended; and, above all, in our democratic times I for one will never be a party to deceiving our own people. When you come into power go back to the old diplomacy, the real Conservative diplomacy, if you please. But, whether you blame me for it or not, my idea of diplomacy is, as it is of every bargain of every kind in every sort of condition, that you should make perfectly clear what it is that you want, and try to get the clearest idea of what it is that your opponent wants, and then endeavour to come to an arrangement.

Now, Sir, it is only these few words—I attach some importance to them myself, I did at the time, and I do now—it is only these few words as to which you can possibly assert that the diplomacy of this country at that time was in the slightest degree minatory or calculated to interfere with the cause of peace. Our object was that President Kruger should not enter upon the course which he ultimately adopted without full knowledge of what our object was. Well, all during this time we hoped for peace. Under these circumstances we are told that we ought to have moved the forces of the Crown, and that is what we are told by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. They seem to think that we could deal with this question in an autocratic and dictatorial way. No, Sir. We cannot do anything in secret. Everything, even the smallest movement, under such circumstances is known to all the world. Of course, we had to consider when the time came what was to be done when we would no longer have any choice. Of course, Lord Wolseley, who is not a politician, suggested—I forget what he called them—"discreet movements" or something of that kind. The thing is impossible. We who are politicians know that it is absolutely impossible. Hardly a regiment could be moved without everybody knowing it; therefore we could not take any really substantial or important step without thereby giving a warning to the Transvaal, which it might have been wise to give, but which might have been followed by a declaration of war which would have been supposed to be due to our action. It was a very difficult and delicate case. I do not, let me say, defend myself against those who think we acted wrongly. Undoubtedly there were preparations which otherwise we might have made, but which if made, would have become known, and perhaps hindered the object we had in view.

Now, Sir, what are we told now? The hon. and learned Gentleman for half-an-hour, at any rate, repeated to the House the reports, or the substance of the reports, of the Intelligence Department. We knew everything that is contained in those reports. It is quite true that the hon. and learned Member says we ought to have known. I repeat, in order to give him satisfaction, that we knew all about those reports [Cries of "Balfour did not know"]; but the hon. and learned Member does not make a distinction, which he ought to make, between those things stated by the Intelligence Department as facts and those things stated as opinions; and that is a very important distinction. In the case of facts we can accept them without the slightest doubt; but in the case of opinions they are submitted for criticism and comment. But what became of those reports? They went to the War Office. That was the first place. They were intended for the War Office. Does the hon. and learned Member suppose that the Intelligence Department is for the private information of the Colonial Secretary? If he or any of his friends think that they are mistaken. It is primarily for the information of the War Office, and the War Office, perceiving the reports concerned matters in which the Colonial Office was much interested, sent copies to the Colonial Office which is entitled to them, and did comment upon them from time to time. I ought to have said what I say now, that I do not yield to the hon. and learned Gentleman in my admiration of the work of the Intelligence Department. It was said that at the outbreak of war we knew nothing, and that the Intelligence Department must have been very inefficient. On the contrary we knew everything that I think we could fairly have expected to know. We did know the number of men likely to be opposed to us. We did know—I believe almost exactly— the number of the great guns opposed to us and their calibre, and we knew practically the number of rifles possessed by the Boers and the amount of the ammunition which they had. The whole Cabinet knew. [Cries of dissent from the OPPOSITION.] No one has ever denied it. [Cries of "Yes."] Who? [Several HON. MEMBERS: "Balfour."] Certainly he knew, and in his absence I deny that for him. He knew it; we all did, and we discussed it. ["Oh!"] We knew all that. I am not dealing for the moment with the political situation in the two States, but we knew all this about the military preparations of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Well, all that went to the War Office.

It is all very fine to say now that the Government have tried to throw the blame off their own shoulders on to those of anybody else. So far as I know they have not blamed anyone. It is a perfect imposture for hon. Gentlemen to pretend that laymen can have the same valuable opinion or assert the same opinion as military men are entitled to have and assert. When the next war comes, and when the hon. and learned Gentleman attains to that high position to which I hope, in justice to his talents, he will attain, I suppose it will be the office of the Attorney-General which will have to deal with that war. That was not our view. We do not think it is the business of any office but the Military Office or the Naval Office, as the case may be. But as to policy and principles—that is the business of the Cabinet. But for the details of war, it is perfect nonsense to pretend to be in any sense personally responsible. I may have all kinds of opinions about strategy, but I am not conceited enough to put them forward as worth attention for a moment against those of the most subordinate officer in the Army. No, Sir, these facts relating to the military situation came to the War Office in the first instance, and afterwards they were at the disposal of the Government. What, then, was the duty of the Government? They went to their military advisers, they asked their advice, and they had their advice, and I have no reason to believe the advice they received was wrong; therefore I am not blaming the military authorities. What would the hon. and learned Gentleman have had us do? When I came to the Colonial Office how many men were in South Africa? Three thousand men, left there by my predecessor. [Cries of "Hear, hear," "Before the Raid," and "Order."] Was that because there was no danger of war? ["Yes."] Nonsense, there was danger of war, there was real danger of war during the time the right hon. Gentleman was in office. Why, we were very near serious trouble at the time Lord Loch was at Johannesburg. It is very convenient to forget that now, but the situation was one of danger, and was so recognised at the time. Is it pretended that 3,000 men was a sufficient protection against possibilities long before the Raid was ever thought of? It is perfectly absurd. Well, what did we do? We did not want to do anything unnecessary, we did not wish to draw too much attention to it, but in four years we increased that 3,000 to 12,000. But these 12,000 men were not even then properly co-ordinated; there was not enough artillery, not enough cavalry. The right hon. Gentleman knew that perfectly well: he knew—he must have known, having had experience of military administration—that the military arrangements of the 12,000 troops in South Africa were not sufficient, that they were not a complete body, that the arrangements required additions, alterations, changes, and modifications, in order to make them complete even for that force.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: What year is the right hon. Gentleman referring to?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: 1899.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I was not in office then.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Certainly not; but surely the right hon. Gentleman does not mean to say that, although he was not in office, he, having the experience he has had, and knowing all about the organisation of the Army, he did not know, not merely from his own knowledge and experience, but from other information, that the condition of the force was unsatisfactory in the sense that it was incomplete? That is all I say.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Does the right hon. Gentleman refer to a conversation I had with him at that period, and the correspondence that followed it?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN assented.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Will he absolve me from any condition of confidence in regard to it?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, I am delighted to do so. The right hon. Gentleman knows that I am leaving this country very quickly; he knows that probably or, if not, I may tell him, that I am leaving very shortly for a holiday I have not taken for a great many years; therefore it is not possible for me to supply the whole correspondence, but I shall be perfectly content if he will undertake to do so. I shall be glad if he will do so.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In answer to that particular point I must explain that part of the correspondence is locked up in my house in Scotland. It is one of the inconveniences of having two houses that the particular thing you want is in the other house.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I most thoroughly sympathise with the right hon. Gentleman, for I am in exactly the same position. I am afraid I really could not get at the correspondence in the time that remains to me. But I have absolute confidence in the right hon. Gentleman, and I shall be perfectly satisfied if he will produce the whole of the correspondence at such a time as may be convenient to him. For the moment I dismiss the correspondence, and I will rely on this—that it is obvious, with the experience the right hon. Gentleman has had of War Office matters, that he must have known that the 12,000 men in South Africa at the time were not satisfactorily provided for, that they were not properly co-ordinated, and that certain alterations were required. My point is this, although he knew that—and I think he must have known it—he nevertheless declared there was—to use his words—no need for military preparations. That was the state of the case in 1899. About that time—I do not give the exact time, for they were very close together—it became almost certain that war would ensue. There must be some personal difference of opinion in matters of that kind. From Lord Lansdowne's evidence it would seem that I was more sanguine than he was. About the 5th September he thought war was inevitable. I certainly did not. I had hopes for some time after that date—but at all events the matter had got to the point that it was dangerous; and, as we considered that the time had come when we must deal with the necessary reinforcements, we did deal with the necessary reinforcements. We asked the military authorities, "What is the amount of troops you require in South Africa in order that we may substantially defend our colonies?" The answer was 20,000 men. We had within a day or two of the breaking out of war 22,000 men. You may say we ran it very close. So we did. We put it off to the last moment for the reason that I have frankly stated; but we were in time. We did even more than we were required. We had in fact rather more men on the spot before any substantial operation had taken place. They were sufficient to prevent the substantial invasion of Natal. The hon. and learned Gentleman talked of days and weeks wasted in moving the Indian troops to Ladysmith. They were taken from the ship, put on the train, and were at Ladysmith almost as soon as they landed. To those men who fought there during that glorious siege we owe it that Ladysmith remained a virgin city, and that anything like a really dangerous, substantial overthrow of Natal was entirely prevented. That is the preparation we made, and who is going to blame us? You may say we might have sent these reinforcements before. All I can say is you would have had war so much earlier and you would have been the first to blame us and to declare that it was entirely our fault. We asked more. We asked of the military authorities again, "What do you want to carry on the war?" Now what is this ridiculous quibbling about whether the war was to end in annexation or not? No question of the kind was ever raised. The object was to beat the enemy. When we had beaten the enemy we could do what we liked with them; and whether we annexed, or did not annex, had nothing to do with the military authorities. We asked what do you want, and the answer was 50,000 men roughly and generally. The hon. and learned Member produced a statement which amazed me, that Sir William Butler had said that 80,000 to 100,000 men would be required. When did Sir William Butler say that?

MR. ROBSON: Sir William Butler, in his evidence, described a conversation he had with his staff as to that number. He was never asked to advise the Government. He was only asked, so far as the Government was concerned, to prepare a defence scheme on the basis of the existing forces, but he described in his evidence what was the view he had given to the men about him.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Really, the hon. and learned Gentleman would be wiser to wait before he makes interruptions of that kind. I do not know quite how to describe them, but I entirely differ from their tone. The hon. and learned Gentleman, amid the loud cheers of that side of the House, cited Sir William Butler as saying that 80,000 to 100,000 men were required for this work. If he had done so it was his first duty, whether he was asked or not, to say so to us. The Government were employing him. He was one of the representatives of the country. I would not do General Butler, whom I believe to be a soldier of the highest reputation, the dishonour that was done to him by the hon. and learned Gentleman. He did not say anything of the kind. He said something quite different. He said the reverse. In the evidence before the Commission it was stated that all General Butler's letters had been read and the only one that referred to the number of troops required in the event of war in South Africa was in a letter of 10th May, 1899. His words were—

> "All things considered, I put the total of troops required in the event of war between the English and Dutch races"

(He does not say between us and these two colonies.)

> "For that is the real meaning of a war in the Transvaal."

At what did he put it? At 100,000 men? 80,000 men? No. "40,000 men." And yet the hon. and learned Gentleman, who has evidently given hours of time to the study of the Blue-books, and read every word of them, and picked out every syllable which could possibly tell against the Government, comes down here and delivers a philippic, and produces an impression so erroneous! I do not refer more to General Butler. It was thought, not that 40,000 men on the whole, but 50,000 in addition to the 20,000 that were required for the purpose of defending the colony should be sent. We adopted that advice to the letter—No! not to the letter, because we sent more than 20,000 to hold the forts and more than 50,000 men to carry out the operations. The hon. and learned Member, who knows all about military affairs, asks why it was we did not succeed at first. I am not going to say whose fault it was that we did not succeed at first. But I thoroughly agree with him that, if we had succeeded at first, our military advisers would have been found to be correct in the opinion that 70,000 men would have been sufficient to complete the work. But who said at the time that we had not sent a sufficient force? I say that no one of the slightest importance or authority at home or abroad—for, of course, we paid attention to military critics abroad—suggested that we required to send out more than 50,000 in the first instance to carry on the war.

I now come to a smaller issue to which I must refer. The hon. and learned Gentleman said we were advised by the Intelligence Department that the Orange River Colony would go to war with us. Yes, we were. It is said that my right hon. friend the Prime Minister declared that we were not. My right hon. friend can defend himself, and I do not know how far the extract read from his speech may have been qualified. But if it was not qualified, I can only say that my right hon. friend went a little too far. We both knew, and did not know. We knew in the sense that there was a treaty between the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal. But who could say in the light of the past history of South

Africa, or of any part of the world, that at the exact moment that treaty would be fulfilled? Mr. Schreiner—a gentleman who is quoted by hon. Members on the other side if by any chance he says anything that lends itself to their view, but whom I am content to take as a very honourable man, and a man of keen judgment, thoroughly conversant with the local situation—had assurances from the President of the Orange River Colony, Mr. Steyn himself, that the country would not take sides against us. Mr. Schreiner subsequently stated how disappointed he was that these assurances which had been given to him had not been fulfilled. At all events, there was a possibility that Mr. Schreiner was right.

The hon. and learned Member says that we ought to have given the route to General Buller. That is perfectly ridiculous. General Buller had to prepare the plan of campaign, he had to prepare it on two hypotheses. There were two and we gave them. The probable hypothesis was that they would stand by the Transvaal and the other was that it was possible at the last moment that they would fall off. He himself said that we ought to go through the Orange River Colony to attack the Transvaal, but that in case the Orange River Colony remained neutral we could not, of course, attack a friendly State, and would have to go round the other way. What is there in all that on which to base a serious charge against the Government? I say we all knew. The words quoted from the Prime Minister went only to this, that he himself believed it was inconceivable that a friendly State like the Orange River Colony—with whom we had no quarrel, and which was absolutely certain to retain its independence if it did not go to war—would join the Transvaal. But it was quite possible for us to have differences of opinion on a matter of that kind. At all events we asked our military advisers to be prepared for both alternatives; and then when it was decided to go through the Orange River Colony to the Transvaal—which I humbly think would have been the better strategy—a change was made by the Commander-in-Chief in the field, and he went to Ladysmith instead. But where is the blame for the Government? What ground is there for the action of the Opposition except the trumpery excuse that any stick is good enough to beat a dog with, or any Amendment fair where, by hook or by crook, you can lug in the ex-Colonial Secretary and say disagreeable things about his late colleagues. The hon. Gentlemen the seconder of the Amendment wound up in a peroration expressing sympathy with those who died in the war and those who suffered by reason of it. Yes, Sir, so far as that sentiment is sincere ["Oh!"]—Do you want me to dispute it?—so far as that sentiment is sincere, and I do not dispute it in the case of hon. Gentlemen, it finds an echo in every heart. Sir, I should value the sympathy more, and think it of greater value, if it were not accompanied by a partisan Amendment and partisan bitterness of speech.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned"—(*Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at five minutes before Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 5th February, 1904.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PETITIONS.

COURTS OF ARBITRATION FOR ALL STATES.

Petition from Calne, for establishment; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Warrington (two); Bristol; Lancaster; Norton Canes; Radnor Park; Rochdale; Bethania; Ceunant Llanrug; Penygroes; Cesarea; Croesywaen; Liverpool (six); Glasgow (four); Edinburgh (two); Tuxford; Posselpark; Hackney; Garston; Misterton; Spennymoor; New Shildon; Leicester; Gilfach; Clatford; Cholderton; Broughton; Whitchurch; Micheldever; Stockbridge; Mottram; Hartlepool; Torpoint; St. Anthonys; Winnington; Runcorn; Redruth; Camborne; Whittlesey; Atherstone; Pollokshaws; Marsden; Jarrow; Hebburn (two); Bill Quay; Kidderminster; Plumstead; Hanging Heaton; Middleton; Castleton; Exeter (two); Coatbridge; Glenboig; Whifflet; Penzance; Sancreed; Sennen; St. Mary's; Scilly; Halton Chirk; Coatdyke; Portmadoc; Penygroes; Rhyd-ddu; Nazareth; Talysarn; Cae Athraw; Tan y Coed; Hyfrydle; Tainant; Llandynan; Llanrug (six); Glanrhyd; Prenteg; Notting Hill; Sheffield; Middlesbrough (two); Todmorden; Frome; Grangetown; North Ormesby; Arreton; Newchurch; Sandown; Niton; Freshwater; Newport; Clapham; Navenby; Willington; Belmont; Stillington; Gateshead (two); Low Fell; Dunfermline; Cheltenham; Raunds; Brigstock; Woodford; Langley Moor; Llanfairfechan (two); Graig; Clegyr; Llanfyllin; Cwmyglo; Cleveland; Huntingdon; Kilbarchan; Scotstoun; Bridge of Weir; Nitshill; Pangbourne; Ashbourne; Trefeirig; Wootton; Cwmorfin; Bwlchydderwen; Cwmsynog; Aberporth; Nantperis; Llandudno; Cefn Mawr; Pendleton (two); Birkenhead; Sedbergh; Penmachno; Pentir; Preswylfa; Tynmaes; Gerlan; Waenpentre; Rhiwlas (two); Lochgelly; Lincoln (two); Bedwas; Great Ayton; Camberwell; Everton; Wrexham; Waenfawr; Coupar Angus; Burradon; Weston-super-Mare; Lytchett Minster; Hollington; Bridlington; York; York and Scarborough; Poole and Parkstone; and Caersalem; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY.

Petition from Weymouth, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

GREENWICH OBSERVATORY.

Copy presented, of Report of the Astronomer Royal to the Board of Visitors of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (COURTS MARTIAL).

Copy presented, of Return of the number of Courts Martial held and Summary Punishments inflicted during the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WAR OFFICE (RECONSTITUTION) COMMITTEE.

Copy presented, of Report of the War Office (Reconstitution) Committee [by Command]; to lie upon the Table,

EAST INDIA (THIBET).

Copy presented, of Papers relating to Thibet [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL.

Copy presented, of Telegraphic Correspondence relating to the Transvaal Labour Importation Ordinance, with Appendix, the Ordinance as amended in accordance with Telegrams [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of a Light Railway in the borough of Maidstone, in the county of Kent (Maidstone Corporation Light Railways Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Robertsbridge and Pevensey Light Railway Order, 1900 (Robertsbridge and Pevensey Light Railway (Extension of Time) Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the urban districts of Quarry Bank, Brierley Hill, and Rowley Regis, in the county of Stafford (Quarry Bank, Brierley Hill, and Rowley Regis Light Railway Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the parishes of Acton, Edgware, Edmonton, Enfield, Finchley, Friern Barnet, Hendon, Hornsey, Little Stanmore, Southgate, Tottenham, Wembley, Willesden, and Wood Green, in the county of Middlesex (County of Middlesex Light Railways Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of Light Railways in the county of Hertford, in the parish of Watford urban and the urban district of Watford (Watford and District Light Railways Order, 1903) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP).

Copy presented, of General Rules made pursuant to The Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890, and The Judicature Act, 1881 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Intermediate Education (Ireland), Accounts of Receipts and Expenditure for 1902, with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 32.]

2. Richmond Bridge. Cash Account for the year 1902 [by Act].

BREWERS' LICENCES.

Return ordered, "of Accounts of the number of persons in each of the several Collections of the United Kingdom licensed as brewers for sale, *i.e.* Common Brewers, Victuallers, Retailers of beer to be drunk on the premises, Retailers of beer not to be drunk on the premises, and Brewers of beer not for sale, particularising each class in each Collection; and of the number of Licences issued to Victuallers and Retailers of beer to be drunk on the premises and not to be drunk on the premises; and stating also the quantities of malt, unmalted corn, rice, &c., sugar, including its equivalent of syrups, &c., hops and hop substitutes, used by Brewers of beer for sale, and of malt and sugar used by Brewers not for sale, from the 1st day of October, 1902, to the 30th day of September, 1903.

"Of the amount of Licence Duty paid and Beer Duty charged from the 1st day of October, 1902, to the 30th day of September, 1903, distinguishing Brewers for sale from other Brewers.

"Of the number of Brewers for sale (i.) who use malt and hops, or hop substitutes only and (ii.) who use malt with substitutes for same and hops or hop substitutes paying for Licences, from the 1st day of October, 1902, to the 30th day of September, 1903, separating them into classes, according to the number of barrels of beer charged with duty calculated at 1·055 degrees gravity—viz., under 1,000 barrels; 1,000 and under 10,000; 10,000 and under 20,000; 20,000 and under 30,000; 30,000 and under 50,000; 50,000 and under 100,000; 100,000 and under 150,000; 150,000 and under 200,000; 200,000 and under 250,000; 250,000 and under 300,000; 300,000 and under 350,000; 350,000 and under 400,000; 400,000 and under 450,000; 450,000 and under 500,000; 500,000 and under 600,000; 600,000 and under 700,000; 700,000 and under 800,000; 800,000 and under 900,000; 900,000 and under 1,000,000; 1,000,000 and under 1,500,000; 1,500,000 and under 2,000,000; 2,000,000 barrels and over; showing separately, in each class, the quantities of malt, unmalted corn, rice, &c., sugar, including its equivalent of syrups, &c., hops and hop substitutes used; and stating also the number of bulk barrels of beer produced, and the amount of Licence Duty paid and Beer Duty charged in each class."

"And, of the number of barrels of beer exported from the United Kingdom, and the declared value thereof, and where exported to, from the 1st day of October, 1902, to the 30th day of September, 1903, distinguishing England, Scotland, and Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 40, of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. Victor Cavendish.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Ventilation of the House of Commons.

MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, what has been done during the recess for improving the ventilation and sanitary arrangements of the House of Commons, and also if it is intended to do anything further.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) During the recess the improvement of the Committee Rooms and of the lavatories has been continued. The fittings of the lavatories over the Members' Cloak Rooms, in the Library Corridor, and the Lower Waiting Hall and elsewhere have been renewed. Sums will be taken in the Estimates for 1904–5 for carrying on these improvements to completion. Immediately after the Report of last year's Committee on Ventilation, experiments were instituted for the purpose of determining details incidental to power of fans, velocities of air passing through washing screens, etc., etc., and the result of these experiments has only recently been recorded. The improvements decided upon can now be carried out, and will be provided for in the Estimates. The various works will be proceeded with during this year, but there is difficulty in doing much while the House is in session.

Street Accidents—Covered Vans.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. Georges): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, having regard to the number of accidents in the streets of the Metropolis with covered vans, owing to the drivers being unable to see passing and following traffic, he will state whether any regulations have yet been framed regulating the construction of such vans, if so, will he state their nature; and whether it is proposed to recommend their adoption in other large cities of the Kingdom.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) This matter has been the subject of long and anxious consideration, and the London County Council have now, with my approval, made a bye-law requiring all vehicles to be so constructed that the driver shall have a full and uninterrupted view of the traffic in front and abreast of him on each side. The bye-law will come into operation on the 1st May next. Similar bye-laws have been adopted in several large towns; but it rests, in the first instance, with the local authority having power to make bye-laws to decide whether the local circumstances render a provision on the subject desirable.

Criminal Statistics.

Mr. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the number of men sent into convict establishments in England and Wales during the five years 1849 to 1853, and during the five years 1899 to 1903 inclusive, and the average per 1,000 of the population; whether a greater number of old offenders, in proportion to the total convictions, are convicted now than were convicted fifty years ago; and what are the relative proportions then and now.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) The number of persons sentenced to transportation or penal servitude during the years 1849 to 1853 was, on the average for the five years, 2,632 a year, being 14·64 for every 100,000 of the population. The similar average for the years 1898 to 1902 was 844, being 2·61 for every 100,000. As regards the proportions of old offenders it may be stated that in the earlier period the percentage of persons committed for trial who were known to have been previously convicted was 33·74; and that in the later period the percentage of convicted persons received in prison who were known to have been previously convicted was 58·68. But these figures do not admit of comparison. The changes which have taken place in legal procedure and in the form of the statistics, the substitution of short terms of penal servitude for long terms of transportation, and the great improvement made in the means of identification render it impossible to compare the two periods in this respect.

Assessment of Working Men's Cottages.

Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in the preparation of the Government measure as to valuation and assessments, consideration will be given to the present difference between the assessment of cottages owned and occupied by working men and the assessment of similar cottages when the rates are compounded; and whether provisions will be made to modify this practice so as to give greater encouragement to thrifty men to acquire their own cottages.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The proposed Bill will relate only to amendments in the Law with respect to valuation authorities and the effect of and procedure for making valuation lists. Where the owner compounds for the rates he receives a deduction from the amount which would otherwise be payable in respect of the rate, but the valuation of the property is not affected. The alteration in the Law suggested by the hon. Member would therefore be outside the scope of the Bill.

Trade "Corners"—Government Action.

Mr. CHANNING: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any communications have been made by the present or previous Governments to the United States Government as to steps that might be taken by international agreement to restrain or minimise the disastrous results to trade and manufactures in both countries from the manipulation of the produce markets, whether as to cotton or wheat or other articles, by the attempts of speculators to create corners and to artificially drive up prices.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) I am not aware of any such communications having been made.

Foreign Ministries of Commerce.

Mr. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in a position to lay before the House the Reports as to the constitution and functions of Foreign Ministries of Commerce.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The Reports have all been received and will shortly be laid upon the Table and distributed.

Exports of Woollen, Cotton Goods, etc., from France and Great Britain.

Mr. J. A. PEASE: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he can state what were the average yearly values of woollen, cotton, hardware, and silk manufactured goods exported from France, and also from Great Britain, during the five years ending 1853 and 1903 respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The following is the information asked for so far as it is available. (Yarns and thrown silk are included under the head of manufactures.)

	Average Annual Value of Exports of Domestic Produce in	
	1849–53.	1899–1903.
	£	£
Exports (Domestic Produce) from the United Kingdom :—		
Cotton manufactures	29,542,000	71,414,000
Woollen and worsted manufactures	10,025,000	19,284,000
Silk manufactures	1,435,000	1,918,000
Hardware and cutlery	2,805,000	2,163,000
Exports (Domestic Produce) from France :—		
Cotton manufactures	2,609,000	7,147,000
Woollen and worsted manufactures	5,082,000	10,461,000
Silk manufactures	10,990,000	12,728,000
Hardware	Not separately specified.	

Import Duties.

MR. J. A. PEASE: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade upon how many articles an import tariff was placed during the last financial year in Great Britain, the United States, France, Russia, and Germany respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) If the hon. Member refers to articles on which import duties were imposed by the countries named for the first time during 1903–4, the answer is "none." If the Question relates to the number of articles actually charged with duty, it would be difficult to give the information in a form which is not misleading, owing to the various modes in which articles are grouped together or sub-divided in the different tariffs. For instance, the French tariff contains 654 tariff headings, while the number in the German tariff is 43.

Head Constable at Leopold St. Barracks, Belfast.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state on whose recommendation was the recent appointment of Head Constable of Leopold Street Barracks, Belfast, made.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Commissioner of Police at Belfast.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Acting Sergeants.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of acting sergeants holding temporary rank at the Royal Irish Constabulary Depôt, what are their rank and actual charge to the Constabulary Vote yearly; whether they receive the same pay as men holding similar permanent rank; and, will he say what are the duties of these temporary acting sergeants at present, and how many constables of the reserve force and recruits are at present stationed at the depôts.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) There are seventeen constables holding the temporary rank of acting sergeant now serving at the Depôt. The total amount of pay and allowances charged to the Constabulary Vote in respect of these men is £1,275 10s. per annum. They receive the same rate of pay as men holding similar permanent rank. They are employed as follows: four as rough riders, one as swimming instructor, one as gymnastic instructor, one as bugler, two as clerks, one as carpenter who also does ordinary duties when available, and seven as drill instructors. There are 146 reserve constables (including mounted men and members of the band), and thirty recruits now at the Depôt.

Militia Training Bounties—Case of Patrick Kerr.

Mr. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the case of Patrick Kerr, of the Mid-Ulster Militia Artillery, whose application for the usual training bounty last year was refused on the ground of his absence from the training, although such absence was occasioned by his not having received any notice of such training, or having been made aware of the time or place of same; and whether he will take steps to have such bounty paid.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) This is a matter entirely for the General Officer Commanding concerned to decide, and I am not prepared to interfere with his discretion. With regard to the serving of notices the Law on the subject is quite clear, and runs as follows: Militia Act, 1882, Sec. xxii. (4). "The publication of any such notice in the prescribed manner in every parish in the county or area to which a corps belongs shall be sufficient notice to every militiaman in that corps to whom the notice applies, notwithstanding that a copy of such notice is not served upon him."

Alleged Atrocities in the Congo State.

Mr. J. A. PEASE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been drawn to the facts related by Mr. A. E. Scrivener, in the *West African Mail* of 8th January, recording atrocities committed upon natives in the Congo State; whether the British Consul, who has recently returned from the interior, has reported to the Government; if so, to what effect; and what steps the Government have already undertaken, or are intending to take, to enforce the carrying out of the declaration made by the Brussels Act in 1890, intimating the firm intention of the Government to effectually protect the aboriginal population, and insuring for them the benefit of peace and civilisation.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The attention of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has been drawn to the article alluded to. The Report of His Majesty's Consul for the Congo will shortly be presented to Parliament. The circular addressed by His Majesty's Government to the Powers in regard to the administration of the Congo State has already been published: other Papers on the subject will be laid at the same time as Mr. Casement's Report.

NEW BILLS.

MUSICAL COPYRIGHT BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Musical Copyright," presented by Mr. Mount; supported by Mr. Stuart-Wortley Mr. Galloway, and Mr. Malcolm; to be read a second time upon Friday, 26th February, and to be printed. [Bill 1.]

TOWN TENANTS (IRELAND) BILL.

"For the improvement of the position of Tenants in Towns in Ireland," presented by Mr. MacVeagh; supported by Mr. Field, Captain Donelan, Mr. William McKillop, Mr. Joseph Devlin, Mr. Joyce, Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. John O'Donnell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th March, and to be printed. [Bill 2.]

LAND VALUES (ASSESSMENT AND RATING) BILL.

"To provide for the separate Assessment and Rating of Land Values," presented by Mr. Trevelyan; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. William Jones, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. McCrae, Dr. Macnamara, Sir Albert Rollit, and Mr. Whitley; to be read a second time upon Friday, 11th March, and to be printed. [Bill 3.]

RAILWAYS (PRIVATE SIDINGS) BILL.

"To explain and amend Section 76 of the Railways Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, and Section 69 of the Railways Clauses Consolidation (Scotland) Act, 1845, and to amend the Railway and Canal Traffic Acts, 1854 to 1888," presented by Sir John Brunner; supported by Mr. Channing, Mr. Alexander Cross, Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Mr. Field, Sir Alfred Hickman, Mr. Kerr, Mr. Charles McArthur, Mr. Stroyan, Sir William Tomlinson, and Mr. Ure; to be read a second time upon Friday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 4.]

OUTDOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) BILL.

"To amend the Out-door Relief (Friendly Societies) Act, 1894," presented by Mr. Reginald Lucas; supported by Mr. Butcher, Sir Carne Rasch, Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore, and Mr. Charles Seely; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 5.]

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Weights and Measures," presented by Mr. Bousfield; supported by Mr. Parker Smith and Sir John Brunner; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th April, and to be printed. [Bill 6.]

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister," presented by Mr. Charles Seely; supported by Sir Gilbert Parker, Sir Brampton Gurdon, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, Mr. Hambro, Mr. Matthew White Ridley, Sir Joseph Leese, Mr. MacIver, Mr. Mellor, Mr. Charles Shaw, Sir Barrington Simeon, and Mr. Melville; to be read a second time upon Friday, 19th February, and to be printed. [Bill 7.]

TRADES UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Trades Unions and Trade Disputes," presented by Mr. Paulton; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Robson, Mr. Beaumont, Mr. D. A. Thomas, Mr. Johnson, Mr. John Burns, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Runciman, and Mr. Jacoby; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd April, and to be printed. [Bill 8.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Local Government (Ireland) Acts," presented by Mr. Field; supported by Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. Clancy, Mr .Patrick Aloysius McHugh, Mr. John O'Donnell, Mr. Reddy, Mr. Roche, and Mr. Kilbride; to be read a second time upon Friday, 29th April, and to be printed. [Bill 9.]

REGISTRATION OF CLUBS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To provide for the Registration of Clubs in Ireland, and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. O'Neill; supported by Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. John Gordon, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. McGovern, Mr. T. W. Russell, Dr. Thompson, and Mr. Wolff; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 10.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LIGHTHOUSES) BILL.

"To amend the Law with regard to Lighthouses and to abolish Light Dues," presented by Mr. Plummer; supported by Mr. Charles McArthur, Mr. Evelyn Cecil, Colonel Denny, Sir Francis Evans, Mr. Field, Sir John Leng, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Renwick, Sir Albert Rollit, Sir Robert Ropner, and Mr. Charles Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th May, and to be printed. [Bill 11.]

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

"To limit the hours of underground workers in Mines to Eight Hours per day from bank to bank," presented by Mr. Osmond Williams; supported by Sir Charles Dilke, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Jacoby, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Norman, Mr. Thomas Bayley, Mr. William Jones, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Hatch, and Mr. Nussey; to be read a second time upon Friday, 26th February, and to be printed. [Bill 12.]

HALL-MARKING OF FOREIGN PLATE BILL.

"To amend the Law with respect to the Hall-Marking of Foreign Plate," presented by Mr. Samuel Roberts; supported by Mr. Stuart Wortley, Sir Benjamin Stone, Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Mr. Remnant, and Mr. Norman; to be read a second time upon Friday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 13.]

LEASEHOLDS ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

"For the Enfranchisement of Leaseholds," presented by General Laurie; supported by Mr. Spear, Mr. Cohen, Sir George Fardell, and Mr. Louis Sinclair; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th March, and to be printed. [Bill 14.]

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE BILL.

"To establish a bureau for a Minister of Commerce," presented by Mr. Louis Sinclair; supported by Sir Albert Rollit, Sir William Holland, Sir John Brunner, Sir Howard Vincent, Sir Ernest Flower, Sir Fortescue Flannery, and Sir Joseph Lawrence; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd June, and to be printed. [Bill 15.]

TUBERCULOSIS (ANIMALS) COMPENSATION BILL.

"To provide for the payment of compensation to the owners of carcases of animals condemned after slaughter and destroyed by order of a magistrate on account of Tuberculosis," presented by Mr. Price; supported by Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Tomkinson, Mr. McArthur, Mr. Field, Mr. Batty Langley, and Mr. Ernest Gray; to be read a second time upon Friday, 15th April, and to be printed. [Bill 16.]

AGED PENSIONERS BILL.

"To provide Pensions for the Aged Deserving Poor," presented by Mr. Remnant; supported by Mr. Goulding, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. John Hutton; Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. Claude Hay, Colonel Kemp, Mr. Maconochie, Mr. Forde Ridley, and Mr. Groves; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 17.]

RE-VACCINATION BILL.

"To provide for the Re-vaccination of Children after the age of twelve," presented by Sir John Tuke; supported by Sir Michael Foster, Mr. Haldane, Dr. Farquharson, Captain Jessel, Mr. Malcolm, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Moon, Sir Charles Dalrymple, and Sir John Dorington; to be read a second time upon Monday, 25th April, and to be printed. [Bill 18.]

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (WALES) BILL.

"To provide for improving and extending the Procedure for obtaining Parliamentary Powers by way of Provisional Orders in matters relating to Wales," presented by Mr. Vaughan-Davies; supported by Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Mr. Osmond Williams, Sir Alfred Thomas, and Mr. Kenyon; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 19.]

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL.

"To amend the Church Discipline Act, 1840, and the Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874," presented by Sir John Willox; supported by Mr. Charles McArthur, Mr. Austin Taylor, Mr. Mellor, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. David MacIver, Mr. Brand, and Mr. W. W. Rutherford; to be read a second time upon Friday, 10th June, and to be printed. [Bill 20.]

LOCAL TAXATION BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the incidence of Local Taxation," presented by Mr. Cripps; supported by Mr. Wharton and Mr. Henry Hobhouse; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th May, and to be printed. [Bill 21.]

PREVENTION OF POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS BILL.

"To make further and amended provision to prevent the Pollution of Rivers and Streams," presented by Sir Francis Sharp Powell; supported by Sir Wilson Todd, Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Sir John Dorington, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Brigg, Sir John Brunner, and Sir Walter Foster; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd April, and to be printed. [Bill 22.]

AGED PENSIONERS (No. 2) BILL.

"To provide Pensions for the aged deserving poor," presented by Mr. Goulding; supported by Mr. Remnant, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. John Hutton, Colonel Kemp, Mr. Duke, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Carlile, Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Mr. Samuel Roberts, and Sir Albert Rollit; to be read a second time upon Friday, 3rd June, and to be printed. [Bill 23.]

OLD AGE PENSIONS BILL.

"To provide Pensions for the aged deserving poor," presented by Mr. Spear; supported by Mr. Duke, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Goulding, Colonel Williams, and Mr. Randles; to be read a second time upon Friday, 26th February, and to be printed. [Bill 24.]

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To give the Ratepayers a direct Veto on the Liquor Traffic in their respective areas in Scotland," presented by Mr. Hunter Craig; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Black, Sir William Dunn, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Robert Wallace, Mr. John Hope, and Dr. Farquharson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 29th April, and to be printed. [Bill 25.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

"To prohibit the sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday," presented by Mr. Perks; supported by Mr. Charles Wilson; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th May, and to be printed. [Bill 26.]

SHOPS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Shops," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. John Burns, Sir Ernest Flower, Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Mr. Lloyd-George, Colonel Kemp, Mr. McCrae, Mr. Melville, Mr. Nannetti, Sir Barrington Simeon, and Mr. Tennant; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 27.]

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

"To establish a single Franchise at all Elections and thereby to abolish University Representation, and to remove the Disabilities of Women," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Logan, Dr. Macnamara, Captain Norton, and Mr. Shackleton; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 28.]

IRISH TOBACCO BILL.

"To repeal the Law which prohibits the growing of Tobacco in Ireland," presented by Mr. William Redmond; supported by Mr. Hayden, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Charles Devlin, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, and Mr. Joyce; to be read a second time upon Friday, 29th April, and to be printed. [Bill 29.]

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.

"To provide for the Taxation and Purchase of Land by Local Authorities," presented by Mr. Logan; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Harwood, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Toulmin, and Mr. Logan; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 30.]

COLONIAL MARRIAGES BILL.

"To legalise certain Colonial Marriages," presented by General Laurie; supported by Mr. Rothschild, Mr. Arthur Stanley, Sir Gilbert Parker, and Captain Jessel; to be read a second time upon Friday, 19th February, and to be printed. [Bill 31.]

MEDICAL ACT (1886) AMENDMENT BILL

"To amend the Medical Act, 1886," presented by General Laurie; supported by Sir Walter Foster, Sir John Tuke, Mr. Rothschild, Sir Howard Vincent, and Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree; to be read a second time upon Friday, 19th February, and to be printed. [Bill 32.]

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILL.

"To amend the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by Sir Carne Rasch, Sir Henry Seton-Karr, and Mr. Field; to be read a second time upon Friday next, and to be printed. [Bill 33.]

PUBLIC TRUSTEE BILL.

"To provide for the appointment of a Public Trustee and Executor," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by by Mr. H. D. Greene, Mr. Howard, and Lieutenant-Colonel Tufnell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 19th February, and to be printed. [Bill 34.]

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SATURDAYS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the sale of intoxicating liquors in Ireland on Saturdays; and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. Sloan; supported by Sir James Haslett, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. T. L. Corbett, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, and Mr. Wood; to be read a second time upon Friday, 13th May, and to be printed. [Bill 35.]

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL.

"To amend the Agricultural Holdings Acts and to make other provisions as to the Tenure of Agricultural Land," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Price, Mr. Harold Reckitt, Mr. Brynmor Jones, and Mr. Lambert; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 36.]

OLD AGE PENSIONS (No. 2) BILL.

"To provide Pensions for persons over sixty-five years of age," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Broadhurst, and Sir Albert Rollit; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 16th February, and to be printed. [Bill 37.]

CORONERS' INQUESTS (RAILWAY FATALITIES) BILL.

"To amend the Land relating to Coroners' Inquests, in the case of Fatal Accidents on Railways," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, and Mr. Schwann; to be read a second time upon Monday, 15th February, and to be printed. [Bill 38.]

SAVINGS BANKS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Savings Banks Acts," presented by Sir Albert Rollit; supported by Sir Frederick Banbury, Sir James Woodhouse, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Broadhurst, Sir Brampton Gurdon, Sir William Holland, Mr. John Campbell, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Sir George Bartley, and Mr. Edmund Faber; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 39.]

SMALL HOLDERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the tenure of Small Holdings in Scotland," presented by Mr. Black; supported by Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Weir, Mr. John Dewar, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Harmsworth, Mr. J. D. Hope, and Mr. Ainsworth; to be read a second time upon Friday, 17th June, and to be printed. [Bill 40.]

SUNDAY CLOSING (WALES) ACT (1881) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Sunday Closing (Wales) Act, 1881, and to make further provisions respecting the Sale of Intoxicating Liquors in Wales and Monmouthshire," presented by Mr. Herbert Roberts; supported by Sir Alfred Thomas, Mr. Herbert Lewis, and Mr. William Jones; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th March, and to be printed. [Bill 41.]

ADJOURNMENT.

Resolved, That this House, at its rising this day, do adjourn till Monday next.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

[FOURTH DAY.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [4th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign—*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament." — (*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But humbly represent to Your Majesty that the facts now made known in regard to the preparations for and conduct of the recent war in South Africa, and particularly the evidence taken by Your Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into those matters and their Report thereon, disclose grave negligence and mismanagement on the part of Your Majesty's Ministers, whereby the duration, magnitude, and cost of the war were greatly increased.'"—(*Mr. Robson.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I have intervened much earlier in this debate than I had any intention of doing because of the very pointed way in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham referred to me in more than one or two parts of this subject during his speech last night. The speech ended close upon twelve o'clock, and, therefore, I was unable to follow him at the time, but I am anxious now to dispose of those attacks which he made upon me with so much vehemence and persistence. The right hon. Gentleman made a remarkable speech. My hon. and learned friend behind me, the Member for South Shields, brought forward his Amendment with great moderation, with cogent arguments, lucidly placed before the House. The right hon. Gentleman appears to have interpreted that speech entirely as what he called a malignant attack upon himself. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the old Dickens story of King Charles's head always getting into Mr. Dick's petition, and he said that in this case he was King Charles's head. Undoubtedly the right hon. Gentleman is the occupier of that place and discharges that function in his own speeches at all events. It has come to this, as my hon. and learned friend found last night—not much to his discomfiture—that whoever ventures to differ from the right hon. Gentleman and to expose his errors, is at once assailed as if he had committed the crime of high treason. We have all been called very ugly names. I have had my fair share of them myself. Because I wished, as I thought, however mistakenly it may be, to unite closer the two islands of Ireland and Great Britain, I was called a "Separatist." Because I objected to some of the right hon. Gentleman's proceedings I was called a "pro-Boer." Because I did not indulge in high-falutin' language, such as appears to be considered necessary in some quarters, I was called a "Little Englander," and the words "traitor" and "unpatriotic" were thrown in.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): Not by me. I did not use the word "traitor."

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If the right hon. Gentleman did not actually use the word himself, I can assure him that, inspired by his example, many of his obsequious followers did apply it. The right hon. Gentleman last night claimed a certain degree of irresponsibility in this matter. He seemed to think it strange that anybody should involve him in this question of preparation for the South African War at all. Why, Sir, he is the most responsible of all. That is why he occupies so large a part in the speeches made on the subject. Whether for good or for evil, he and his diplomacy and his manners of negotiation and his tone and spirit are in the very forefront of responsibility. The right hon. Gentleman quoted a phrase which I have, with little variation, used before the war, during the war, and since the war. I said before the war that the story told and the reasons alleged to us by the Government and the information communicated to us by them, did not seem to me to indicate any case for war or for preparations for war. Supposing I had stated it twenty times oftener and in stronger terms, it would not have been the slightest excuse for want of preparation on the part of the Government. I had formed an independent and necessarily partial opinion, and having a public duty to perform I stated it to those interested in what my opinion was. But the Government were in charge of the whole business; it was their policy, not mine, thank goodness, which was being carried out, and therefore anything that I said does not do any good to their case. But the right hon. Gentleman said that in an unfortunate speech at Ilford I had put this observation of mine much more boldly and plainly than I afterwards saw reason to do. He therefore implied that in subsequent repetitions of the same idea I had shifted my ground a little, and had seen reason to withdraw something of what I had originally said. Now what did I say at Ilford? I take this from *The Times* of 19th June, 1899, and will read it if the House will have patience—

> "Of the conduct and policy of Her Majesty's Government in this particular (that is, South Africa) we are not in a position to form an opinion. We cannot judge of it until we have seen the Papers which have been promised on the subject, and until this information has been received, in my opinion a discussion in the House of Commons would lead to no advantage and might even be attended with disadvantage to the interests of our country. But there are some newspapers which talk freely of the probability, and even of the necessity, of war, and the public mind has been much disturbed in consequence. I think it right to say plainly that I for my part can discern nothing in what has happened to justify either warlike action or even military preparations."

This is exactly what I said afterwards, judging from the information given to us by the Government. I went on—

> "The people of this country have no hostility to the people of the Transvaal. They have no desire whatever to humiliate them or to give them offence or to take from them any part of the independence which they enjoy. Our only desire is to see the inhabitants of all the States in South Africa, our own colonies as well as the other States, living and prospering in perfect harmony with each other. Let us not be blind, however, to the fact that the maintenance of this harmony is no very easy matter, and it requires the greatest prudence and delicacy in the action which we take."

I did my utmost in that speech to avoid embarrassing the Government, and at the same time to calm the feelings of the public as far as my little authority could extend. I think it was a very different course which was taken by the right hon. Gentleman when, with infinitely greater responsibility, months afterwards, and when things had become much more critical, he used the language referred to last night. But my words, the right hon. Gentleman says, encouraged the Boers. Was I expected to be dumb while there was being pursued what I believed—even with such comparatively imperfect information as had been given to us then—was becoming a misguided, dangerous, and probably disastrous policy? Was I to be dumb lest an expression of any disapproval of the right hon. Gentleman's conduct should encourage the Boers? Why, I should have been greatly surprised if the Boers themselves had not knowledge enough of this country to expect and believe that such a policy as he was pursuing had not, at least, the support of the whole of the British people. The right hon. Gentleman says that he honestly strove for peace. I believe him. I have no reason to dispute or doubt his peaceful intentions, but I greatly doubt whether he took the most peaceful manner of disclosing his policy.

I must go back, I am afraid, to the origin of things and give a brief history. The right hon. Gentleman came into office in 1895, and at once indicated to us all that his purpose was to subvert the prudent ways of his predecessors. The British Empire had been built up by cautious and wise statesmen, and they were not adventurous enough, it appears, for the right hon. Gentleman. He made a speech almost immediately after his appointment in which he indicated the great field which had to be developed, and the great estate we possessed, and in other ways by his whole manner of treating the question he roused, and, as it were, gave a cue to all the adventurous spirits in His Majesty's dominions. What was the immediate result? Certain men in South Africa who had designs of their own felt that now a friendly hand was on the reins in London, and we had the Jameson Raid. Will the right hon. Gentleman get up and say that, in his belief, if a Liberal Government had been in power the Jameson Raid would have occurred? No, Sir, it would not. The "jumping off" ground at Pitsani was refused by a Liberal Government, but granted by the more favourable authorities that had succeeded them. The Raid occurred, and then we had the subsequent proceedings.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. It is rather difficult to carry my memory back to the details, but I think he is mistaken. Surely, unless I am wrong, the Liberal Government were in negotiation with Mr. Rhodes for the transfer of the whole of the territory? It was not a mere question of "jumping off" ground being granted.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand it was indicated that at some future time it might be granted. [MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Ah!] But at that time it was the cause of this very cirumstance.

*MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: There is nothing of that in the Papers.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Then we had the right hon. Gentleman in this House, notwithstanding that a Committee of the House had condemned the Raid and all who abetted it in the strongest terms, giving his certificate of honour and good character to Mr. Rhodes. Therefore, I am stating what no man can dispute, when I say that thereupon arose a deep and almost angry, certainly an alarmed, state of suspicion, not only in the Transvaal, but in the Orange Free State; and then at that time began those military preparations of which we have heard so much and which culminated in war. [AN HON. MEMBER: No, they began before, and cries of "Look at the accounts."] Another incidental evil effect of that most mischievous event of the Raid was that the Boers and every one in South Africa acquired the lowest and most contemptuous opinion of British military skill, which had something to do with what happened. As to the Orange Free State, when your neighbour's house is on fire you are concerned; and really I am amused at all these elaborate refinements and discussions as to the effect produced in these two States. Was it not the most natural thing in the world, almost necessary, that they should join with the Transvaal? The right hon. Gentleman said that the course taken by the Orange Free State was unexpected, and he stated last night that President Steyn had given a promise to Mr. Schreiner that the Free State would not move.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That it would not be aggressive.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I will read these despatches at all events. Here is the telegram from the Prime Minister of Cape Colony to his Honour the State President, dated 11th October, referring to "the intense strain of the position," and expressing confidence "that the territory of this colony will not be invaded from your side," pressing "the same abstinence" on the President of the South African Republic, and stating that the "forces on our border are not more considerable than defence purposes require." The State President at Bloemfontein replied that—

> "Assurance could be given that Cape Colony territory will not be invaded, if you would give the Government the guarantee that this State will not be invaded from the territory of the Cape Colony and also that no troops would be allowed to go through Cape Colony or move towards the border of this State or that of the South African Republic. I have wired your telegram to the South African Republic, and if you give me the guarantee as above I will use my influence to get a similar assurance from the South African Republic."

[A laugh from the MINISTERIAL Benches]. Hon. Members laugh, and I suppose they have the idea that that was an absurd stipulation to make. I quote it as throwing light on the statement of the right hon. Gentleman as to the absolute assurance given by President Steyn.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is not the only one.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is dated 11th October, almost the last day on which any communications passed. The right hon. Gentleman says that in the time of his predecessor the defences of the colonies were so neglected that there were only two battalions, or 3,000 men, in South Africa, and the Government had to raise the force. Yes, Sir, because the force depends upon your policy. At that time there was no ground of fear whatever. [Cries of "Oh!"] The force was adjusted to the policy. There are two policies that you can pursue in a case such as this. There is the policy of force and of threats resting upon force, and on the other hand there is the policy of patience and of peaceful and conciliatory negotiation. That second policy was supported, and demanded from the Imperial Government, by the Natal Parliament, by the Cape Parliament, by Lord Rosmead, who had been High Commissioner, by the Commander-in-Chief, and by all the constituted authorities except the High Commissioner, and by all who had special knowledge of the question. The alternative was a policy of force and of threats depending upon force. Who was in favour of that policy? I cannot find any authority of the same quality as those I have quoted. The right hon. Gentleman went on to develop this question of the strength of troops, and he said that the Government worked the number of troops up to 12,000, but that I was well aware that those troops were not in a thoroughly efficient state because they were not, as he said, co-ordinated. We seem to be drenched with that word "co-ordinated" in military as well as in educational matters. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to suggest that I had peculiar knowledge on the subject, and I asked him whether he referred to the conversation which I had the pleasure of having with him, and to the correspondence which followed. He said that he did, and I asked for leave to break the seal of secrecy or of confidence and to state what occurred. It was on 20th June, 1899. The right hon. Gentleman wrote to me a note saying that he would be very pleased if I would let him have a little conversation with me. I replied in similar terms, and the right hon. Gentleman came to my room. He told me that he wished to submit to me, and of course to those with whom I acted, two proposals that the Government were contemplating. The first was to send out 10,000 men to the Cape—I think Natal—and the right hon. Gentleman asked whether the Opposition would join in recommending that step to the House and to the country. I think I must have looked a little surprised, or I may have uttered a few words of surprise, for the right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "You need not be alarmed. There will be no fighting. We know that those fellows"—that was the Boers—"won't fight. We are playing a game of bluff."

I think I ventured to express frankly to the right hon. Gentleman my opinion that such a policy was unworthy of the country. If I did not say that, I felt it; but at all events I said that it was a rash and dangerous policy, that it was dangerous to begin a course of bluff when you did not know what it might lead to, and I said that I must consult my colleagues. I only gave my own personal impression at the time. Then the right hon. Gentleman said that there was another thing—that the forces in Natal were deficient in equipment—in transport especially—that it lacked mobility; and the right hon. Gentleman wanted to know whether there would be any adverse feeling expressed if that fault were made good. Well, Sir, I said that I would consult my colleagues on both of these proposals. I invited my colleagues to come, and I told them what the right hon. Gentleman had said, and I took their mind on both these questions. With regard to the equipment of the troops, which, I think, meant the purchase of mules and horses mostly, we said that we thought there was nothing to be urged against the proposal—it being desirable, if we had a force, that it should be efficient, provided that it was done in such a way as not to be ostentatious or provocative—as not to be trumpeted about—with the view possibly of producing some effect upon the minds of men in South Africa. But as to the other proposal we could only reply that the responsibility for a great movement of troops such as that lay entirely with the Executive Government, and that we were not prepared to relieve them of any part of their responsibility. I think that that was practically the gist of what occurred. I wrote a note to the right hon. Gentleman expressing these opinions—that the undivided responsibility must rest with the Government—and the right hon. Gentleman replied on 24th June, saying that he quite understood and appreciated what we had said, and hoped that there would be an opportunity later of further private consultation, if desirable, or something to that effect. No such opportunity for further consultation presented itself, and there the matter ended.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not want to interfere in the slightest degree with the right hon. Gentleman's speech, but I do not entirely agree with the account which he has given. With the permission of the House, I will explain when he has finished.

* Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I will confess to the House that for a long time afterwards, and indeed up to the present moment, that declaration of the policy of the Government sunk into my mind and remained there. To my mind it amply explains all the want of preparation, all the mistakes, and all the complaints. Some, including the Prime Minister, have blamed the soldiers for the want of preparation. The right hon. Gentleman blames the Opposition. Some Ministers say that they were fully informed in every respect. But we cannot forget what Lord Salisbury told us—that they knew nothing about it, because the Boer cannon were conveyed by some wonderful feat in piano-cases and the like. But what is the use of troubling our heads with all these excuses and methods of accounting for the facts, when we have this declaration that a game of bluff was being played, that there was no sincere expectation or intention of using actively any forces which might be sent out?

I do not know that I have anything more to say on that question. I do not wish to speak at all in too strong terms of anything that has happened, or to rake up old questions of difference. But not only have I myself from the first been convinced that the policy of the right hon. Gentleman was a mistaken policy, that patience and good nature and concessions of a small kind would in a few years (probably by this time) have smoothed over the whole difficulty, but I am convinced that, if the right hon. Gentleman was intending to pursue the policy of force, nothing could have been more unworthy of this country than the particular form of that policy which is denominated by the name of bluff.

One thing more I wish to say, and it applies to the Chief Secretary. He quoted a despatch of Lord Ripon's on the question of the franchise, a despatch which he represented to the House as being rather in the nature of an ultimatum presented to Mr. Kruger. What are the facts? It was not a despatch in the sense of having been ever despatched. It was a Paper. There were negotiations going on about Swaziland, and Lord Loch was directed to go up to Pretoria and arrange with the Transvaal Government. Mr. Kruger at this time hinted that it was his intention to raise the question of the Convention; and Lord Ripon wrote to Lord Loch to say that, if that question were raised, the first thing put forward would be the question of the five years franchise, and in this Paper Lord Ripon used certain arguments in favour of it. Why, Sir, we are all in favour of a five years franchise, if not of a lower one, in the Transvaal—everybody except, apparently, the present governing authorities in the Transvaal. But when the negotiations began Mr. Kruger never raised this question of the Convention at all; therefore, *a fortiori*, the question of the franchise was never raised. This document remained, therefore, merely a hypothetical confidential instruction for Lord Loch. Some time ago the late Secretary of State for the Colonies asked Lord Ripon whether he would allow the arguments used in this Paper to be printed in a public document, and that was agreed to, out of courtesy, as between one Secretary of State and his successor. The right hon. Gentleman now uses this Paper, which was never more than that, as a parallel case to the hurling of an ultimatum at a foreign State.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Wyndham, Dover): Lord Milner made the same proposal, but he did not hurl an ultimatum.

* Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Well, I do not know. If there was not an ultimatum there were a good many ultimata. There was practically a great deal of shaking of fists, a great deal of fumbling with the butt-end of the revolver. The sands were running out and the sponge was being squeezed. No, Sir, I think that the right hon. Gentleman was misled in quoting that document in the way he did. It is not what I should have expected from him, and I think that if he looks into the

thing he will find that it hardly bears out the character of importance which he gave to it. That is all. I have disposed of the points which the right hon. Gentleman put forward so violently last night, and I trust that I have made it clear to the House that most of us have had no other intention than to avoid, where we could, embarrassing the Government in any way, and, at the same time, to advocate in this House that peaceful settlement and arrangement in South Africa which would, I believe, have accomplished the same results, and better results, than have been produced by the waste of all the blood and treasure which have been spent.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Mr. Speaker, in reference to the communications between the right hon. Gentleman and myself, to which he has referred again to-day, we are both, as the House perceives, in a certain difficulty, inasmuch as the papers connected with it are in both our cases at a distance. I have done my best to supply the deficiency by sending down to Birmingham this morning, and I hope I may be able before I leave to obtain the original papers. They consist of the letters referred to by the right hon. Gentleman, and also, in my case, of an account of the conversation written immediately afterwards. I differ from the right hon. Gentleman, both in regard to what passed—I do not differ very substantially, but I do differ considerably—as to what passed in our conversation, and as to that it is possible that we may be unable to come to an absolute agreement, because it is always difficult to remember what passed at a conversation. But, fortunately, there can be no difficulty whatever with regard to the correspondence, and I differ also from the right hon. Gentleman in regard to that. Now, at the time of which the right hon. Gentleman speaks—June—matters, although in my opinion they were not by any means poignant, were undoubtedly serious, and I deprecated more than anything else the possibility that a serious discussion, which might ultimately end in hostilities with other Powers, should be treated as a Party matter, and it was my earnest desire, if that could be done, to remove altogether any Party feeling or controversy from the further discussion of the subject. I spoke to the Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, on the subject, and I had his assent to communicating with and seeing the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman therefore, has omitted the way in which the conversation was opened by me. I told him what I have said to the House. I told him that if he was inclined to accept that view of the situation, and to consider that a great matter of this kind, affecting national interests, should be treated not in the ordinary sense of a Party question, but as a matter in which the Opposition had as much right to be consulted as the Government, then on my part, and on behalf of my colleagues, I was prepared to make him this offer, that we would take no steps whatever without consulting him, and that, if of course we found afterwards that we could not agree, it might be necessary to separate; but, at all events, that each further step from that date, if he and his colleagues saw eye to eye with us, would be in effect a joint proceeding. The right hon. Gentleman, I thought, accepted the idea without unwillingness, but he said—

> "What kind of consultation? What are you thinking of now, for instance?"

Then I told him that two questions were before us. The first was whether the 12,000 troops that were then in South Africa should be made up—I think the proper word is to complete the unit; I am afraid I am weak in the matter of military terms—

*Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Transport.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Well, I have no doubt the transport was an important portion of the proposal, but my recollection is that at that time there was a deficiency of field artillery in proportion to the numbers of the troops and a deficiency of cavalry, and that we proposed to send, not, of course, a large number, but a sufficient number of cavalry, artillery, and transport to complete the forces then in South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman said, almost in the words he has used to-day, speaking for himself and not for his colleagues, that as far as he was concerned he saw no objection whatever to that—he did not think any objection would be taken to that. Then I said there was another proposal, which was to reinforce the garrison by sending out a considerable number of men—it may have been 10,000; I do not remember, but I told the right hon. Gentleman that in my opinion there was no probability at that time of war. But I said that our difficulty was then, as it had been all along, to convince the Boers that we were in earnest, and it had been represented, I do not know whether I expressed it as a settled opinion of the Cabinet, but, at all events, it had been under consideration by us, whether it would not have a good effect to send out a considerable body in order to impress on the Boers the fact that we did mean to pursue this matter to the end. The right hon. Gentleman now says that I used the word "bluff." I cannot charge my memory with a contradiction. It is not a word that I am fond of, or that I think I should have been likely to use. My impression would have been, but for the contrary statement of the right hon. Gentleman, that I did not use that word.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to prove that I have not said so from my own memory only? Immediately after leaving the right hon. Gentleman I came into the House and met one or two of my colleagues, and I used the same expression to them. It is within their recollection.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That I quite believe, and I absolutely believe that the right hon. Gentleman thinks that I used it. But he must remember this. It may have been the impression I gave him, but it may not have been the word I used or the impression I intended to give. I certainly feel confident that at that time I had no idea whatever of "bluffing" in the sense in which the right hon. Gentleman considers that I used the word. My whole intention and object was—and about that I am absolutely certain—to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues to consider whether it would not be desirable to produce a considerable force in South Africa with a view to giving us greater influence in the further negotiations. Now I come to the letters, and here I differ in an important sense from the right hon. Gentleman, and I believe that the letter which he wrote to me will prove that I am right. My recollection of that letter is this, that having said in private conversation that, so far as he was concerned, he was quite willing to approve of the strengthening of the 12,000 men, though he doubted whether he and his colleagues would be willing to send a large additional force, in his letter he wrote that he, having consulted his colleagues on the proposition I made—which included this proposition for a sort of neutral ground in dealing with this matter, the absence of political controversy, which was really the important point—that he, having consulted his colleagues, they had come to the conclusion that they could not accept the offer of the Government, and they must leave the Government to entirely take its own responsibility. He went on to say in the same letter that in those circumstances I must consider as withdrawn any statement which he had made on his own account with regard to the—not what he said just now [Cries of "Oh!"], certainly not; I must give the exact words—that I must understand that the words which he had used as expressing his own opinion with regard to the strengthening of the 12,000 men in the field must also be considered as withdrawn. That is my recollection, and, as I say, the production of the letter, either by the right hon. Gentleman, if he has it, or by me, if I can find it, will clear up that entirely. It does not in the least degree affect the good faith and sincerity of the right hon. Gentleman or of myself, but it is not an unimportant difference as to the facts, because it is my impression that our offer was entirely and absolutely refused; and we were told that even in the small matter of increasing the force and making complete the unit in South Africa the Opposition would give no Party support beforehand to that, but must leave us to take whatever steps we pleased on our own responsibility. That is my view of the position.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): What we are faced with at this moment is an indictment for want of preparation for the war and for the absence of troops in Natal. What is the right hon. Gentleman's own confession? The right hon. Gentleman's own confession is that the urgency of this matter was brought before him as early as June 20th, 1899. The right hon. Gentlemen was invited to co-operate, and he has given reasons which are perfectly clear as to the opinion which he held, and which he was entitled to hold, that our policy was a mistaken policy, and that by patience, good nature, and concessions on small points, further action might be avoided. He is entitled to hold those views, but I ask Members on this side of the House on what possible ground can he then come forward and complain that the Government did not complete the preparations which he himself did his best to discourage.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, I did not. My objection in this particular case was to what I called a policy of bluff. If the right hon. Gentleman had come and told us of a dangerous condition of things, and if they had admitted us to some of their secret information, we might have modified our view.

*MR. BRODRICK: The right hon. Gentleman understood that the question had arisen of reinforcing the troops in Natal and sending 10,000 men there. The right hon. Gentleman was perfectly entitled to hold the view that no such reinforcement was necessary, and that he at all events and his Party would not contribute to any such demonstration for the purpose of securing peace. His view was that peace could be secured by weakness in Natal, and not by strength. For five weeks, nay more, after these *pourparlers* between my right hon. friend and the right hon. Gentleman, he came down to the House and told us that as to the war itself he could only repeat what he had said elsewhere that—"from the beginning of this story to the end of it I can see nothing whatever which furnishes a case for war." That is the right hon. Gentleman's opinion, but what is the position in which we are this afternoon. We are here under this indictment that we were willing to risk the good name of the country in negotiations and by bluff, but that we were not preparing for the actual event of hostilities. I think that anybody who looks at the whole of this story will see that the approach to the Leader of the Opposition was a patriotic approach. It was a peaceful approach. It only occurs to me now as I am speaking, that such an approach is not unusual among men of patriotic feeling when their country is in danger of a devastating war. What is going on at the present moment in Japan? We saw in the telegrams only yesterday or the day before, I think, that not merely members of the then Government, but the past members of past Governments had been called in and convoked in order to give their counsel. For what? Not in order to raise Party difficulties in a great national emergency, but in order that the nation should present an unbroken front to an enemy at a moment of overwhelming danger. I would say for that side of the House that they did not rate any lower than we did the danger and difficulty of warlike operations with the Dutch States in South Africa. They were fully conscious of that danger, and an invitation was addressed to the right hon. Gentleman who had hitherto stood aloof. We knew that he had been backward in supporting the Government at a moment when we thought that from patriotic motives they deserved support. The mass of the House never knew till to-day how backward he had been, and under what pressure. The right hon. Gentleman has made his own attempt to absolve himself. I think it was a vain attempt.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have nothing to absolve myself from.

*MR. BRODRICK: The right hon. Gentleman says he has nothing to absolve himself from. Then, are we to understand that he dissociates himself from the attack on the Goverment for having undertaken this war with a want of preparation, in which preparation he declined to associate himself, and to which preparation he put by his speeches every impediment which was in his power?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Let me remind the right hon. Gentleman that it would not be any great crime to hesitate at a particular moment to send reinforcements. This was in June; July passed. In the month of August Mr. Chamberlain wrote to Lord Lansdowne saying that while he wished to avoid the relaxation of pressure he saw no occasion for reinforcements. He should attack the right hon. Gentleman himself.

*MR. BRODRICK: Does that citation absolve the right hon. Gentleman from the charge that when he was told there was a danger of war, and that that danger—[OPPOSITION cries of "When?"]

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: You were not going to fight. [An HON. MEMBER: You were going to bluff].

*MR. BRODRICK: My right hon. friend has given a somewhat different interpretation to that conversation. He has stated that any idea of bluff in the sense in which it was used by the right hon. Gentleman was foreign to the whole tenour of his conversation.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Hear, hear!

*MR. BRODRICK: Two points were advanced. One was that the sending of these troops would have had the effect of making for peace. The other was that the invitation addressed to the right hon. Gentleman was addressed to him with the view of blending all Parties in any future action which might be taken.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Hear, hear!

*MR. BRODRICK: If the right hon. Gentleman really desired peace he had the opportunity at the eleventh hour of working with those who had been working from the first hour in the same direction, but did he accept it or was he willing to take a hand at all?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Not at such a game.

*MR. BRODRICK: Well, not at such a game! That was not his game, but, having impeded the game, he now comes down to complain of those who tried to play the game earnestly. [An HON. MEMBER: Bluff.] The right hon. Gentleman last night tried to explain away his speech in which he spoke of there being no necessity for preparation.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did not explain it away. I stated the circumstances in which it was said. That is all.

*MR. BRODRICK: I do not know any form of words ever used by one man in this House which played so large a part in the General Election as that speech of the right hon. Gentleman. The country, who did not express their opinion on anything else, expressed their opinion in the strongest possible way on the impediments which the right hon. Gentleman and some who acted with him, not all, had placed in the way of the Government in a purely national crisis of overwhelming gravity. Is it not rather a stretch even of ordinary Parlimentary forms for the right hon. Gentleman to come forward now to associate himself with those who complain of this lack of preparation. Not being willing to enter into the vineyard himself, nor anxious for the reward which he might have got even at the eleventh hour, and having taken care not merely to decline to work in the vineyard himself, he denounced as blacklegs those who went in and were willing to work. I think it strange that men who have throughout declared that the war was unjustifiable, that our policy was wrong, that our preparations were unnecessary, should come here to-day to attack us for our inertia at a moment when they were hanging on our backs, and should pose themselves as foiled advocates of a strong policy. That is the position that the Opposition occupy this afternoon. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean made an appeal yesterday that this question should not be treated as a Party question. He referred in somewhat vehement terms to the speech of the Chief Secretary as a Party speech and an appeal to Party passions. I quite admit that on occasions the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean has known how to divest himself of Party, but was it quite worthy of him last night to barb an attack on the Government and the Prime Minister by saying that the Commission had been nominated by the Government, a Commission, the chairman of which was one of the political opponents of Government, the members of which were representative men, not one of them in any way whatever attached to the Government, and whose findings, to say the least, bore the appearance of impartiality? I think also I can claim that in every speech, except that made by the Leader of the Opposition, who has not touched on the Motion at all, the Commission's Report has been used to blame the Government. Where the Commission blamed the Government the hon. and learned Member quoted the Commission, and where the Commission absolved the Government the hon. and learned Member scavenged the evidence to find proof that they were wrong. The right hon. Gentleman himself said he objected, and I am going to endeavour to carry out the spirit of what he said' in the course of the few observations I have to make to this bandying across the floor of the House of accusations as to the number of stores which were laid by the late Government, and the number of stores laid by the present Government—the number of stores put into arsenal——

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I made no accusation on the subject. I quoted the Prime Minister's saying that the stores were allowed to go down after Mr. Stanhope left the War Office, and added that the Prime Minister had claimed that the stores had again been raised before the war to Mr. Stanhope's standard. The evidence before the Commission showed exactly the opposite.

*MR. BRODRICK: My point was that the Government, which the right hon. Gentleman helped us to displace, had not adopted Mr. Stanhope's standard, but had even adopted a lower standard of their own. What is the main result of the findings of the Commission? We were told that our preparations were insufficient. That has been discussed throughout this debate. Take one single point on which I think the Government have a right to absolution. The Commission shows that the highest military authorities differed in all respects as regards the route of advance. It shows that Lord Wolseley differed from Lord Roberts as to the nature of the advance, and that General Buller differed from both. General Buller advocated an advance by Natal, whilst Lord Roberts chose the Cape. Lord Wolseley rejected both, and said the advance should be made by Bloemfontein. There is one point on which all soldiers agreed, whether you take Lord Wolseley, Lord Roberts, Sir Redvers Buller, or Sir William Butler. None of them put the force with which we ought to advance at so high a figure as that adopted by the Government. How can you say that our preparations were insufficient when the number was actually in excess of the number of soldiers asked for. May I invite the attention of the House for one moment to the attack made on the Prime Minister in regard to the Orange Free State? It has been urged that the Prime Minister in stating that no one could have known that the Orange Free State would join in had shown that lamentable want of foresight which characterised the Government throughout these operations. Is there any truth whatever in that indictment? The Prime Minister undoubtedly did say that we had no quarrel with the Free State; that the Free State had no treaty with the Transvaal which made it necessary to join in the invasion of our territory; and the Free State had no interest in the Uitlander question. It has been urged that our reliance upon these facts made us reduce our preparations, and that the ignorance of our commanders as to the probable action of the Free State prejudiced the whole course of the war. Now I deny that in every case. Every preparation was made on the assumption that it might be necessary to fight the Free State as well as the Transvaal, and moreover, from a strategic point of view, it was held by some of the best and highest advisers of the Government that the neutrality of the Free State would have to be watched and might prove even a greater danger than the actual hostility of the Free State. I should like to know whether the Front Opposition Bench take their share of responsibility for the statement that has been circulated in a little leaflet by thousands throughout this country, that the mistake about the Orange Free State cost the country thousands of lives and millions of money. Sir, there is not a shred or shadow of foundation for that statement; and therefore the attack made on the Prime Minister last night had no foundation whatever.

May I say one word in support and in amplification of what fell from the Chief Secretary last night. My right hon. friend dwelt with great force on the points on which the Commission pronounced a verdict in favour of the Government. He dwelt on the thoroughness and remarkable dispatch of the mobilisation of the troops, and he cited their commendation on the quality of the stores and food supplies which was the most successful feature of the war. He mentioned their opinion of the various articles provided, and he also dwelt with not too great force on the denunciations of the exaggerated statements with regard to the failure of the supply of horses. We were told that the stores were insufficient. My right hon. friend made a very clear statement on that point which could not be gainsaid. We did find great arrears in 1895, and we set ourselves first to the better equipment of the Navy. That we were bound to do. We voted for the Army £4 for every £3 voted by our predecessors, and we raised our Army Estimates very considerably in consequence. During that time we had considerable military expeditions in the Soudan, for which we had to find enormous stores, and on which we spent something like a million of money, which we might have spent in filling our storehouses and regaining that which the opposite Party had spent £10,000,000 in losing before. I may say this, that although the stores ran low they never ran short during the war. And if they did not run short I think the House might, in its generosity, admit that some credit is due to those men in the War Office, much abused though they be, who, under Sir Henry Brackenbury and Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke, supplied an Army in the field three or four times the size of that they had been asked to provide for, in an efficient condition for two and a half years.

I would invite the attention of the House to three or four points, before I sit down, on which the Commission found real scope for their labours and which the Government have shown their anxiety to meet. The Director of Military Intelligence has had very marked compliments paid to him in this debate. I associate myself in every respect with the commendations given to Sir John Ardagh for the intelligence which he provided for us under circumstances of great difficulties. I know that the right hon. Member for West Birmingham has made it clear to the House that that intelligence did reach members of the Cabinet, but we cannot conceal from ourselves that the verdict of the Commission is against us on that question. The Commission stated that there had been a neglect owing to the system, for all practical purposes, of the work of the Intelligence Division. I think that that shows that defects did exist. At all events, amongst the military authorities there was not sufficient cohesion inside the War Office and between the War Office and the Government; not that cohesion on which we could depend in a future war. I go far beyond the Commission in that respect. I say not only was there a want in 1895 of sufficient cohesion to secure that the full force of the best military intelligence should be communicated to the Government, but that there was not sufficient cohesion between the Army and the Navy. Both required to be brought under the authority of the Prime Minister. The Defence Committee as it then existed was not a sufficient instrument, and it was that feeling which moved both the First Lord of the Admiralty and myself as soon as the war was over to approach the Prime Minister with a view to the creation of the present Defence Committee. Without labouring that point, I think the House will readily understand that the sittings of the present Defence Committee, amended and amplified as they may be under the new conditions, have secured, at all events, that the two leading military and naval Members are brought face to face with the Cabinet, week by week, through the session and occasionally during the autumn, and that no such *hiatus* can again occur, as occurred in 1899, between the Military Intelligence Department and the Cabinet. That point is not one which arouses enthusiasm in the party of attack, but I venture to say that it is by far the most vital result that can take place from the investigations of this Commission. The majority of the Commission did not propose changes in the War Office itself, nor in the system of the Army; but the Minority Report made a suggestion towards which, before that time, we had already gone a long way. That men should work in water-tight compartments in such a matter as National Defence is absolutely impossible. The association of those men in the War Office who have been sitting with regularity for the last three years has prevented that isolation which caused many of the hitches in the late campaign and which is made still more impossible by the organisation now proposed to be set up.

The Commission reported strongly about the training of officers and troops. Long before the war, in Lord Lansdowne's time, great changes had been made in that respect. In the beginning of 1899, opportunities for training and manœuvring troops had been afforded as never before. There is one step which has been taken and of which scant recognition has been made by the public, but which will have a lasting effect on the organisation and training of the Army. And that is that officers are appointed now to command troops which they are to command in war. It was universally admitted that the manœuvres of last year showed a nearer approach to a condition of war, and a greater appreciation by the officers and men in the training they had received, than anything that has taken place in this country before. May I remind the House that before the Commission sat all the censures which had been passed on the medical department had been dealt with to such a degree that Sir F. Treves was able to tell the Commission that we should now have the finest medical service in the world?

One other matter, our Army had been trained, had been located previously to the war, mainly with the view of home defence, with a Navy which can defend us, or should be able to defend us, from any formidable attack. That view has been abandoned; the Prime Minister has shown as clearly as possible that the policy adopted by this Government three years ago of holding a force in readiness of 120,000 for service abroad was the only legitimate policy for a country which has great dependencies to defend. That, again, is a result of the war. No longer shall we approach another war, another emergency, with a doubt in our minds whether we can send 70,000 men abroad. The policy of the country has been unmistakably declared. I am very glad this debate has been raised; I think it has swept away a good many misconceptions. I do not believe that those who read the indictment of the Government on the one hand, and the defence of the Government on the other, will doubt on which side they ought to give their votes in this controversy. Hon, Members opposite have shown to their own satisfaction that in the state of the negotiations, which was known to them as well as to the public, preparations for war were inevitable. They cannot produce one single point in which they assisted those preparations which they now reproach us for insufficiently making!

The hon. Member who seconded the Motion endeavoured to barb his invective against the Government by citing passages from the Committee on the Crimean war as bearing on the Report we have under discussion. The records of the two Committee will remain side by side in our library for the deliberations of this House for all time. What is the comparison between them? The one said that by the negligence and want of foresight of the Government 52,000 men, the largest force ever in the Crimea at the same time, had been left deficient in everything that makes the Army able to take and keep the field; the other Report has made it clear that a force five times that number was mobilised, maintained for two and a-half years, and well supplied to the satisfaction of the officers and men composing it, and under conditions which, while they gave much occasion for improvement and much ground for the acceptance of experience, on the whole caused the repeated commendation of the Commissioners as to the way in which the service was carried out. I, for one, rejoice that these defects have been brought out; I rejoice also that the exaggerated estimates of them have been authoritatively disproved. And I believe, with my right hon. friend the present Secretary of State, that now that we have had our difficulty, now that we have confessed where the mistakes have arisen, now that we have set ourselves to repair them, the worst possible policy for the country and for this House is to continue denunciation of our Army system and Army administration, and of the results which have been achieved. I have known what it is, during a period which was not directly under the review of the Commissioners, to conduct a war under those conditions of criticism; I have known what it is to receive from the front protest after protest against the speeches and criticisms which were being made in this House because of the discontent they created among those who had been previously contented. I claim that the adverse critics have said their say, and our point is that we have met, with difficulty no doubt, but still successfully, a call which was unparalleled and unexpected. I say that the mistakes were to a large degree remedied before the sitting of the Commission, that our system is now being reviewed from end to end. I say we did not wait for the verdict of the Commissioners, or for the censure of Parliament, to undertake reforms which have altered the whole condition of our preparations for the eventuality of a war. That being so, let the House of Commons decide between us, whose record at all events shows a sense of our responsibility and an earnest desire to repair that which has been amiss—let the House of Commons decide between us and those whose military record is no record at all for the last twenty years, who let matters go back, without introducing a single reform when they were last in power, and who hung on our backs at the critical moment, and who now come forward on the most flimsy ground and try to subordinate the great national question of Army reform, which we are determined to carry through, to a Party cry.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) said that if they were to take the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken in earnest, they would fain have to inquire how it was that, after his super-excellent administration at the War Office for four years, he now found his services transferred to another Department. He himself could not help thinking that one cause of that transference was the knowledge which the Government had that the Report of the Commission was hanging over the right hon. Gentleman's head. The right hon. Gentleman in his speech said that the unpatriotic action of the Opposition prevented the Government making good the deficiencies which they acknowledged existed in the force which they were to maintain in South Africa. If it were unpatriotic not to make good such deficiencies, on whom did the blame lie—on the Government who had the power and the knowledge, or on the Opposition who had neither one nor the other?

*MR. BRODRICK: That was not my point. My point was that we could have strengthened the knowledge of the Boers as to our being in earnest by sending out more troops; but that that advantage would have been altogether nullified if it had been met by loud protests on the part of the Opposition, thereby encouraging President Kruger in his belief that the Opposition were opposed to the war.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that if the right hon. Gentleman had read the evidence before the Commission he would know that Sir Mansfield Clarke told the Commission in the clearest possible language that it was perfectly possible to make all those preparations without any one of them becoming public. If that were so—and he could not question the authority of such an eminent military official as the late Quartermaster-General—the blame lay on the Government, not only for not preparing for the war, but also for trying to deceive the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman also said that in the present dispute between Japan and Russia, statesmen on both sides were called in to give counsel, but what had been taking place in

Japan and Russia during the past two months? There had been the largest possible public preparation for the struggle which they feared would ensue. What took place here in the early summer of 1899? The Government did not make any sort of preparation, public or private, for war, although they were responsible, not the Opposition. Even if the Opposition were called into counsel, the Government were responsible for the policy which rendered preparation necessary. The right hon. Gentleman also further said that the last General Election was fought on the cry of the war; the next General Election would be probably fought on the cry of "bluff;" and the cry which floated the right hon. Gentleman in in 1900 would probably float him out in 1904. The right hon. Gentleman went on to tell the House of Commons that the various Governments with which he had been connected had spent £4 for every £3 the previous Government had spent. What had they got to show for it? The right hon. Gentleman said that the storehouses never ran out. Did he remember the evidence of Sir Andrew Noble before the Commission? Sir Andrew Noble was told by the Secretary of State for War there was no shrapnel in the country, except what was in the limber boxes of the artillery, that there were only two cases of ammunition in the country, and that the military stores of every kind were inadequate for ordinary peace requirements. [Mr Brodrick dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shook his head, but that was the statement of the Director-General of Ordnance; it was also the statement of the Inspector-General of Remounts, of the Director-General of the Army Medical Service, and of the Army Service Corps. Every one of these officers gave evidence in which each said that the requirements of his Department were not satisfactory even up to a peace standard. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the reports of the Intelligence Department reached the Cabinet, but had the Cabinet the intelligence to understand them? These defects were discovered in 1895 by the Intelligence Department. They were not rectified until 1903, and they would not have been rectified then had it not been known by the right hon. Gentleman that the evidence of Sir William Nicholson was going to be made public.

*Mr. BRODRICK: That is a charge, a direct charge, against me. I beg to tell the House that it is absolutely without foundation. So far from its being a case of the Intelligence Department having been left alone from 1899 to 1903, in 1901 Sir William Nicholson was placed on the War Office Council, so that the whole of the evidence from his Department reached the Cabinet direct. But apart from that, as regards the organisation of his Department, I took up the matter very early. The Chancellor of the Exchequer adopted the very natural position that permanent additions to that Department should be delayed till the end of the war. We had an enormous number of officers employed on intelligence in South Africa, and at the end of the war I brought the matter before him. It was before the Treasury long before Sir William Nicholson gave any evidence whatever; and I obtained for him a large increase of officers, I think it was thirteen or fifteen, before he ever went before the Commission.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that if the right hon. Gentleman would turn to the Report he would see the statement there made that £3,000 was to be added to the Estimates for the Intelligence Department. Sir William Nicholson stated that that was the first time he had heard anything about that increase.

*Mr. BRODRICK: Sir William Nicholson was constantly in conference with the Committee that sat at the War Office the previous year to arrange what his future staff was to be, and that was submitted to the Treasury a long time before I think the Commission began its sittings. As to the charge against myself, a most unusual charge, that I never would have made any representation to the Treasury at all to add to this Department unless I had known that General Nicholson's evidence was going to be published, I think the hon. Member should withdraw it. I never knew what evidence Sir William Nicholson had given on the subject, nor had it the slightest effect on my action in the matter, which had been taken months before.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that, if the right hon. Gentleman put it on those grounds, he withdrew at once the personal charge against himself, but he would not withdraw it against the Department of which he was the head. He had not got the reference with him at the moment, but the evidence was there in the Report of the Commission for every man who cared to read it. The right hon. Gentleman had further declared that he was glad the debate had been raised. He commenced his remarks by saying it was unworthy of the Opposition to have brought a charge of failure against the Government. This debate had shown that the Opposition were justified in making that charge. The evidence in the Report was clear upon it. It was somewhat difficult to debate the whole of the Report because of the enormous mass of evidence collected and the multitudinous details gone into by the Commissioners, and by the fact that any criticism on the Report itself must fall into one of two lines. First, the want of preparation by the Government, second, the inability of the War Office to perform the duties which fell to their office during the war. That made any criticism on the Report extremely difficult, but it did not diminish the responsibility of the Cabinet. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had expressed the opinion that so far as the Army was concerned the Government deserved an acquittal. So far as the House was concerned, the jury which had to give the verdict on this debate was packed, but the discussion which took place in the House would penetrate into the country, and the country was the ultimate judge. The right hon. Gentleman said, supposing you did bring in a verdict of guilty, it was better to have the devil you did know than the devil you did not. But he remembered reading of a case where a house was cleansed of seven devils and the last state of that house was worse than the first.

AN HON. MEMBER: Because the other devils came in.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said the devils alluded to were the devils who had come in in the last three or four weeks. It was quite true that the right hon. Gentleman was not fully responsible for the inception or the continuance of these defects, but he was responsible for a great part of the time covered by the Report. Lord Lansdowne, the first of the various Secretaries of State for War, had pointed out that the enemy we were going to fight was more formidable than any we had grappled with for years, and in view of that remark they were entitled to criticise the action of the Government. Reference was made to the fact that there was no plan of campaign, and Lord Lansdowne said—

> "I cannot see that anyone was prejudiced by the lack of a definite plan of campaign."

His secretary did not take that view, but thought that if a general had been sent out with definite instructions it would have been far better, and that view was the one that had been accepted by the Commission. No precise and definite instructions were given to any general officer who went out. That had been admitted by all. Lord Roberts pointed out to the Commission that in India, when hostilities were threatened, the Commander-in-Chief and the Quartermaster-General both submitted to the authorities definite plans of campaign, and measures were taken accordingly. Such was the experience of Lord Lansdowne during his Vice-royalty of India. And that was a plan that must have recommended itself to him during the time he was expecting hostilities to break out between ourselves and these two Republics, yet so far as they could make out, no precaution had been taken by him or any of his subordinate officials.

It had been said that no army was better found in the field than that in South Africa. The evidence relied on for that statement was that of Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener. They were not there until five months after the war broke out, and by that time the defects in the supply and so forth had been remedied by the officers on the spot. The evidence that should have been relied on was that of the Chief Supply Officer, General Buller, Lord Methuen, and others on the spot, which was of an entirely different character.

Colonel Richardson, the officer in charge of supplies in South Africa, had stated that when General Buller landed there was only a fortnight's supply for the troops, and that was brought out in the ships with which General Buller came. There were £8,500,000 worth of supplies in the storehouses in England, and Ladysmith had ten days supply for the ultimate garrison there, yet the fall of Ladysmith was to be the turning point of the war. That was to be the signal of the rising of the whole Dutch nation in South Africa against the British. What happened in order to pour supplies into Ladysmith? All the transport service of South Africa had to be disorganised and everything else had to be taken off the single line of railway that supplied it in order that these supplies should be got in. Such things might sound ridiculous to people now, but they were not ridiculous to those who had to defend Ladysmith, or to the Boers who hoped through the want of our preparation to be able to capture Ladysmith and raise the whole of the Dutch population. Lord Lansdowne had said if we had been at war with a naval Power we should not have sent out two army corps, and should have had a few weeks to accumulate stores on the sea-board, but we were not at war with a naval Power, the Boers had no fleet, and the result of all this delay was the Boers had all the advantage of the initiative, and during the weeks in which supplies and equipments were being prepared here, South Africa might have fallen. The whole of the delay which occurred proceeded from a false assumption. The Government pretended that they were ignorant of the preparations of the enemy. They played a sort of game with themselves, and thought that other people would be as slack as they were. But the Boers, who learned their lesson better, rigidly adhered to the maxim that diplomacy and military preparations should proceed side by side.

There was only one more point he wished to allude to. The right hon. Gentleman had talked, not for the first time, of the statement that at the beginning of the war in October, 1899, the War Office was not in a position to put into the field any part of the two army corps laid down as the standard of our requirements. There was only one organised body which went out—viz., General Barton's brigade of 45,000 men, and apart from that there were no organised forces in the country. Our fortresses, after we had provided one army corps, were practically defenceless, while as to the Auxiliaries, Lord Wolseley had stated that they were armed with obsolete guns with a range of shell fire which was contemptible, and that it would be dangerous and criminal to ask these Auxiliary forces to stand up against any modern artillery. That was the position around London, that was the state of the country after the right hon. Gentleman and the War Office had sent out one army corps. No wonder the Report stated that the defences of the country were at the time dangerously weak, and if in those facts the right hon. Gentleman could find matter for congratulation, well he must indeed be very short of comfort. If this state of things was to be remedied it could not be done by pretending that all had been well in the past and probably would be well in the future. The right hon. Gentleman had not always taken up that attitude. He could remember the time when he attacked the Secretary of State for disregarding the advice of his military advisers. Yet he seemed very apt nowadays to shelter himself behind the advice of his military advisers. He told them that if he or his successor failed they ought to be dismissed. But the House had been debarred by the action of the head of the Government from dismissing the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India. It might have been an act of kindness on the part of a colleague to remove him from the War Office but it was an injustice to the public, for unless faults were brought home to the individuals responsible for them we should have neither economy nor efficiency in the future.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford) thought the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean was hardly correct in his view as to quick-firing guns. The French had a battery of quick-firers in China which for some reason were withdrawn; the Germans and the Italians had quick-firing guns, with which they had been supplied at a cost of £2,000,000 in one case, and £1,000,000 in the other, but the guns were not satisfactory. In our case, we had two kinds of guns, one invented by Sir G. Clarke, and he thought the Government were better off now with those guns, although not absolutely up-to-date, than if they had re-armed the artillery three years ago with guns which were now obsolete. He considered the attack made by this Amendment on the present Front Bench was rather unfair. The condition of the War Office was due to the neglect of the Army by the Press, the nation, and the Government for the last 200 years. The country had been willing to find the money, but it had never gone into details, it had always allowed the War Office to muddle on as it could, and the standing Army had always been unpopular. That sort of thing had gone on from the time of William the Dutchman to the time of King George, and from the time of George III. to the South African War. It was the fault of the system rather than of the Government that during the last half-century or century the War Office had got into the condition described by *The Times* that morning as absolutely rotten and effete. It was well known that when Army Estimates came up for discussion Members immediately left the Legislative Chamber for more congenial employment. It might be, as Lord Randolph Churchill once said, that the Service Members were more vocal than articulate on military matters; but even though they were endowed with all the dialectical ability of the two Front Benches combined, it would be extremely difficult for them to induce hon. Members to listen to them on questions affecting the Services. The present Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was responsible more than any other man for the condition of things which fell out during the South African War. He heard from the right hon. Gentleman three years ago speeches which he considered were the cleverest he had ever heard under the circumstances; and the Chief Secretary carried with him all Members on the Government side and the greater part of those on the opposite side of the House. But he and others felt that in certain details the right hon. Gentleman was absolutely incorrect; he had not had time to study the question. But that was not the fault of the right hon. Gentleman. When a man, after being in civilian life for some years, was pitchforked into a maelstrom of difficulties such as the War Office, he could not be expected to know every detail in six months. It was surprising that this attack should have come from a supporter of the Leader of the Opposition who, a few years ago, tried to run the British Army on the cheap by keeping it short of powder. The real point of importance was that this system which during the last 200 years had cost the country millions of money and thousands of lives, was, he hoped, under the auspices of the present Secretary of State for War, about to be for ever abolished.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.) said that during the last ten years in Parliament he had taken a continuous interest in Army affairs, and, although a strong Party man, had invariably placed the welfare of the Services before Party allegiance. Before the outbreak of war he gave constant support to the Government in doing the best they could for the Army, and he desired to treat the subject now under discussion in a somewhat different way from that adopted by previous speakers. He fully agreed with the views put forward by the hon. Member for the Chelmsford Division. Over and over again when attempting to improve Army conditions they had had to speak to a practically empty House, empty Press Gallery, and unsympathetic public, and his sympathies had been altogether with the gentleman who had had the misfortune to be in charge of the War Office. The present Chief Secretary for Ireland, than whom no abler man sat on the Treasury Bench, did wonders to extricate the Government from the difficult position in which it found itself during the late war, and his successor the present Secretary of State for India had to perform a most difficult task in the face of fierce opposition from the military element at the War Office. The difficulty in dealing with the present question was that last night the Chief Secretary spoke with one voice, whereas the Prime Minister had recently spoken with another. It might be admitted that had great preparation been made it would have acted as a provocative upon the South African Republics. That the Government were sufficiently warned by the military authorities was agreed. The Chief Secretary declared that when the Government came into office their entire attention was devoted to the Navy, and very properly so. But the Secretary of State for War and his assistants must have known that they had duties to discharge, and they ought to have prepared what little army the country would allow them to have, for the object for which it was intended. Quite apart from the South African war we were supposed to have two army corps in a complete state of efficiency. We were to have at our disposal in this country 120,000 men, of whom 70,000 were to be ready to go at a moment's notice to any position for the purpose of carrying on warlike operations. Not only were they not in that condition, but, although warned every time the Army Estimates came up for discussion, the Government omitted to take the proper precautions for keeping that force in readiness.

There were in the House fifty or sixty members who, like himself, had had the honour of wearing Her Majesty's uniform, and they had done their utmost to force successive Ministers to put the Army on a sound foundation. On 8th April, 1897, he asked the Secretary of State whether he was aware that the Army Medical Department for the two army corps was forty short of its number, and the reply was that it was forty short, but that measures to make good the deficiency were under consideration. In June, 1898, the right hon. Gentleman declared there were sufficient for two army corps when at full strength, but it was then under strength. In 1898 on the Army Estimates he pointed out that not two but three army corps would be required in the event of war in South Africa, that the two army corps were not fully equipped, that we could not move troops from India or Egypt, and that the troops left in the Empire would be insufficient for its defence. In March, 1899, he pointed to the failure of the system and the fact that out of eleven new batteries only eight had been completed. The Service Members as a body complained of the position in which the Auxiliary forces were, but without avail. It had been urged that in the late war we were called upon to deal with circumstances altogether different from those of any other campaign. That could not be said with regard to the war which preceded the struggle in South Africa—viz., the Egyptian War. Nevertheless, in the debate on the Address in 1900, he pointed out that in the Egyptian War the hospitals were so defective that at the base of operations there were only two nurses, and that men were dying like flies owing to the cheeseparing policy of the Government.

Many references had been made to the fact that our guns were not up to standard; yet during the period 1886–92, while a Conservative Government was in power, the artillery batteries were reduced from six guns to four, and the spare horses taken from them. It was pointed out at the time that properly trained horses could not be produced at a moment's notice, and protests were entered against the starvation that was taking place. The same thing was true of all the departments. Everybody knew the result of the Veterinary Department being undermanned. Through the horses not being properly conditioned, and there being no one competent to take charge of them, at least £3,000,000 out of the £8,000,000 spent was wasted. In June, 1903, the Secretary of State, in reply to a Question, stated that there were no fewer than thirty-five vacancies, that the establishment was 20 per cent. below peace strength, and that there were five candidates for thirty-six vacancies. So that not only were the Departments defective before the war, but even after the war no steps were taken to bring the forces up to their proper strength. It was well-known that when war broke out the fortresses of the country had to be depleted of their guns and the Navy drawn upon, and he distinctly remembered the then Financial Secretary to the War Office, while refusing to supply the quick-firing guns which it was pointed out were absolutely essential, boasting that he had given a sum of £150,000 for converting practically worthless guns into quickfirers. In the face of these facts it was impossible to justify the

Prime Minister's recent statement that immediately on coming into office the Government set to work to bring up the Army which had been abandoned by the "professors of economy."

As to ammunition, Sir H. Brackenbury had stated that there was a deficiency of 326 machine guns, and a reserve of only one horse artillery battery and one 5-in. howitzer, while Lord Lansdowne stated—

> "It would be a national misfortune were it to become known that after our First Army Corps had left these shores we could produce only thirty-six battalions with nothing behind them but numbers of partially trained Militia battalions and men who had been discarded from the regular battalions because they were too young to go on foreign service."

Therefore only one army corps was available, and even that was not properly equipped, for on 11th October Lord Wolseley said—

> "We soon came to the end of our available military stores. I found that a demand for 250 sets of saddlery could not be completed."

Further there was neither clothing nor saddlery for the mounted infantry of the Fifth Division if they had been ordered to embark in the month of November, and the Commander-in-Chief declared that when one army corps had been despatched he had not the necessary material to despatch a second army corps. The Prime Minister did not wish to throw blame upon the military authorities, for he said—

> "What I want you to understand is that all the so-called failures of the war arose out of that miscalculation, and not out of previous War Office maladministration."

But that did not exonerate the Prime Minister for not having ready the two army corps. Then the Prime Minister went on to say—

> "Observe that in so saying I am offering a defence, not for the Government, but for the military advisers of the Government."

The right hon. Gentleman attempted to escape Cabinet responsibility, and that was what he wanted to enforce upon the House. He was not going to take any advantage of that in order to abuse the Ministry, but when the Government attempted to ride off upon the backs of their military advisers, and claimed that they did all the military advisers asked them to do, they stood condemned by the Report of the Commission. He had shown how, years before the war broke out, he had pressed the Government to attend to this service. Surgeon-General Jameson, referring to the deficient medical service, said—

> "He had often made representations at the Army Board, but that the answer given was that 'the trained soldier is the only man you cannot purchase in the open market, and that all the money was wanted for trained soldiers.'"

Well, they did get medical officers in the open market, but they all knew that ordinary medical practitioners had no chance whatever, without previous military experience, when called upon to deal with great administrative questions, or to establish a hospital at the base. The Secretary of State for War of the day said he had reserve medical officers to draw from, but he knew they were men who, for active service, were past their work. The result was that he had to draw upon inexperienced men in South Africa, with the shocking results which were disclosed by the hon. Member for Westminster. The people of this country had not realised the number of men who went out to fight our battles in South Africa who would have been safe and sound to-day if only proper precautions had been taken to keep a sufficient staff of Army medical men for the two army corps. Surgeon-General Jameson went on to say—

> "When the South African war broke out what happened was as follows: The whole, practically, of the Army Medical Corps *personnel*, officers and men, was exhausted in supplying the First Army Corps, and in manning the base hospitals and stationary hospitals."

All that was pointed out two or three years before the war broke out, and in the face of that the Prime Minister said—

> "I do not believe it will ever be maintained that the Army we have sent into the field was inadequately equipped with any modern requirements or any equipment which the progress of invention has shown to be necessary to a modern Army."

That would be poor consolation for himself and many others, for he did not suppose there was a member of the Service Committee who had not sustained some loss during the war, and could count upon his fingers the number of relatives, connections, and friends lost in the war, many of whom might have been saved if what the Prime Minister boasted was true had been true. Here was what Sir Frederick Treves said upon this point—

> "The ambulance waggons jolted and were old-fashioned. The Boers had good ambulances, but an English ambulance is hardly fit to transport the sick."

That was not much consolation for those who had relatives wounded in the South African war.

With regard to stores, so far from being prepared, they were not only deficient, but the Government absolutely refused to incur the necessary expenditure in order to bring their military stores up to what they declared to be the necessities of the situation for the general defence of the country with two army corps. The Commissioners reported that—

> "The Army Board soon brought to light a serious deficiency in the stores and material required on the mobilisation of an army corps. The minutes of the Army Board during the period up to 22nd September, 1899, make it clear that in the opinion of that Board the main difficulty was the refusal of sanction for the expenditure of the money involved, amounting to about £640,000."

Lord Lansdowne said he brought the whole circumstances before his colleagues. The decision not to sanction the expenditure, therefore, was taken by the Cabinet, though Lord Lansdowne of course does not dissociate himself from it. They could not therefore get rid of Cabinet responsibility in this way. In the minute in which Lord Lansdowne brought this matter before the Cabinet he said—

> "As matters now stand, it would not be possible to place a mobilised army corps and a cavalry division in the north of Natal under about four months. If, on the other hand, all our preparations were complete, this period might be reduced by about one month."

Therefore that period might have been reduced by about one month if proper preparations had been carried out in this country. How absurd, under these circumstances, it was to endeavour to throw the blame on the Commander-in-Chief, because every particle of evidence went to show that the whole key of this position was in the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition that the Government were playing a policy of bluff, and failed to make the necessary preparations. They were doing this behind the backs and without the knowledge of the military authorities, and when this policy of bluff failed they came down upon their military advisers and blamed them. Lord Wolseley suggested that an army corps should be mobilised on Salisbury Plain in order to see what defects there were, and in order that they might be ready to move abroad at any moment. That advice was neglected, and Lord Wolseley went on to say—

Captain Norton.

> "As a soldier, it seemed to me to be madness to go on as we were from week to week, not making preparations for an eventuality which to me seemed a certainty."

He went on to say that if those preparations had been ready they might have placed an army in the Transvaal long before they did. It had been said that the transport could not have been got ready. The attempt was made and why was it not got ready? Simply because the Cabinet would not sanction the expenditure. The Prime Minister spoke of starving the Army, but who starved it? Why, the present Cabinet. The Report states that—

> "On the 9th of September the Quartermaster-General asked to spend money on mules, but on the 16th of September the Secretary of State declined to enter upon any expenditure in connection with these services at present."

And the Report went on to say—

> "I think we wanted 6,000 and we were allowed to purchase 1,300 odd, and on the 2nd October permission was given to buy the remainder of the mules we required."

And when it was too late the remainder of the mules were purchased. On the 6th of September, Lord Wolseley said—

> "I pressed that more field artillery should be placed on the higher establishments."

Would that have interfered with political negotiations, for it would certainly have been no threat to the Boers. Lord Wolseley proceeded—

> "The answer I received was that the question should be deferred to the Estimates of 1900."

On the 3rd of November, 1896, Lord Wolseley addressed the Secretary of State on the subject of increasing the Natal garrison and he said—

> "I think I may say that I was always hammering at this one chord, and pointing out whenever I was asked, and even at times when I was not asked, that increases were necessary in order to bring up the Army to what I had

laid down as the minimum which I thought we always ought to have ready for home defence; and to enable us to send a small army of two army corps abroad."

Throughout the war he had supported the Government because he knew that owing to the want of preparation and the enormous task before them they were straining every effort to carry out that task as well as they could under the circumstances. His point was that the preparations which ought to have been made, irrespective of any war whatever, were not made. The Commander-in-Chief himself distinctly stated that he was always hammering away and trying to get the Government to bring up the Army to the standard he had laid down. He did not blame the Army authorities, but he blamed the Cabinet for not having given those in charge of the Army proper support. After the war had begun they pressed for a system of organising drafts at Aldershot in order to keep the Yeomanry in South Africa what he called alive, but their advice was not taken until a year or two after, and what was the result? Lord Methuen said—

> "When the second contingent of Yeomanry came out, their riding was hopelessly bad; they had no knowledge of a horse or how to ride, and there were only a few farmers among them."

They had been pressing the Government over and over again to make the Yeomanry force effective. The Commissioners wound up by saying—

> "We regret to say that we are not satisfied that enough is being done to place matters on a better footing in the event of another emergency."

His contention was that they were in no better position at the present moment to send two complete army corps abroad, and have one fully equipped at home, than they were prior to the war. The Commissioners went on to say that—

> "The Volunteers and Yeomanry proved themselves of value in the late war under an organisation which was improvised for them in the face of the enemy."

Complaint had been made by some hon. Members on the Front Bench that the Opposition had not dealt with the Report, but the right hon Baronet the Member for the Forest Dean dealt with the Report and dealt with it exhaustively. There had been no answer given to any of their statements, therefore, whether the Government stood upon the platform of preparation prior to the war, or upon the platform of the Report of the Commission with reference to the carrying out of the war, they stood condemned in the eyes of the country. If the people only realised that owing to the conduct of the present Government between 20,000 and 30,000 British homes had been rendered desolate it would go very hard with the Government when they appealed to the country.

*COLONEL WELBY (Taunton) said that after listening to the greater part of this debate, it was very refreshing to find an hon. Member on the other side who had had practical experience of the Army rising to take part in the debate. He honestly confessed that, taking into consideration the speeches of the mover and the seconder of this Amendment, and those which had been delivered in support of it, it was very difficult to believe that the intention of this Amendment was one to improve the military forces of this country. The hon. and gallant Member opposite ended his speech by saying that the Government stood condemned. He ventured to say that this was not a question of acquittal or condemnation either in the eyes of the man in the street or of the nation at large. The nation was well aware from the Report of the Commission, and from the experience of our soldiers in South Africa, that there had been want of foresight, want of preparation, and there might have been mismanagement; but what they felt was that, no matter which Party had been in office, there would have been the same state of inefficiency, and it might have been even greater if the other side had been in office. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] He was sorry that hon. Members opposite should differ, but it was quite natural that they should. All he was trying to do was to represent to them the general feeling of the country upon this point. The people felt that under our present military and political system there could not have been a war of this magnitude of which it could not have been said that there was want of foresight, want of preparation, and mismanagement. What the nation really wanted was not to pay attention to the details which the hon. and gallant Member opposite had so ably put before the House, but to know how in future they were going to avoid a repetition of those mistakes and this want of preparation and foresight. This Amendment was directed against His Majesty's Ministers. He ventured to say that if they wished to fix the blame, they would have to lay it more upon the system. Ever since he came into this House he had been a constant critic of the War Office. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean said they ought to approach this subject in a non-Party manner. He could appeal to his past action upon this subject, for he had spoken against the Government and voted against them, and he had divided the House against the Government in what he believed to be the best interests of the Army and the country. Therefore he stood in an independent position in rising to speak that afternoon to condemn the Amendment which had been moved.

Under their present military system it was impossible that there could be proper preparation for a war of this magnitude. The late war had carried a lesson into every home in the country, and the mismanagement and want of foresight in the conduct of that war was known in every village; but to say that those who were to blame were the Ministers of the Crown, and not the system, was an absolute mistake. The people knew perfectly well that if the Front Bench opposite had been in power, there would have been in all probability even less preparation, and there would certainly have been less foresight. [OPPOSITION cries of "No, no!"] There was no efficient preparation, simply because the nation had never foreseen or anticipated a war of this magnitude under modern conditions. Therefore there had not been that public opinion behind the Government upon this question without which it was impossible to carry out a far-reaching reform of the Army system. He felt it his duty when the late Secretary of State for War produced his scheme of reorganisation and reform to oppose it tooth and nail. He thought, however, that the scheme put forward by Lord Esher's Committee struck at the very root of the inefficiency of the War Office and the mismanagement of the Army, and he was prepared to give his hearty support to that scheme. Although he had been a constant critic of His Majesty's Government, and had attempted from the time he came into the House to the breaking out of the war to bring to the notice of the War Office what he knew from experience were defects in their military system; although his criticisms were very often received with a very wet blanket and a shower of very cold water, especially from the present Secretary of State for India, his only regret was that his words were wasted when they might have saved a great deal of trouble and disaster during the late war. He repeated that the responsibility for all these defects did not rest upon His Majesty's Ministers, but upon our system of Army organisation. Under the conditions prevailing when the war in South Africa broke out, it was impossible for the Government to make further preparations in Cape Colony and Natal, for they had not the troops to send there unless they sent out the Guards Brigade, called out the Reserves, or brought troops from India. If any of those three courses had been adopted, he ventured to say that there was not an hon. Member opposite who would not have said that the Government were forcing on a war. Under the present system they could not send out troops in that special way without drawing attention to it in the House of Commons, and in every newspaper, and in that way every word would be carried to foreign countries, and to that particular country which was in dispute with ourselves. Under those conditions it was absolutely unjust and wrong to condemn His Majesty's Ministers, who did their best under the circumstances. Critic as he had ever been of the War Office, he would say that when the strain of the war came upon them no Department could have worked harder and better, for they toiled night and day, and did everything which was possible for them to do. They were not able to put into the field well organised and prepared troops because their system prevented it. With regard to the Amendment, he looked upon it as one which was simply political and had nothing whatever to do with the military defects of this country. The need for military reform was present to the minds of all those who were not simply and purely Party men, and when this new scheme which was before them was brought forward they would have to debate it, and they must look at it in the light of all the defects and deficiencies which had been shown in the Commission's Report. In the light of what he had said it would give him very great pleasure to vote against this Amendment.

*MR. J. S. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) said that if the question were asked, "Who won the war?" the answer of the country would be, the Army and the Country. He was particularly sorry to hear the suggestion made that the responsibility for what they all deplored lay at the door of the Opposition and the Army. He thought the Opposition were able to take care of themselves. He would recommend hon. Gentlemen opposite to say nothing against the Army in the country. He was reminded in this connection of a story of what happened before the battle of Waterloo. The Duke of Wellington, observing a British soldier walking about the streets of Brussels, said to a friend, "That is the gentleman who has got to do it, and if they only give me enough of him I think we shall do it." That had been the secret of our success, not only in the late war but in all the wars in which we had been engaged. These men were a credit to the country. It had been frequently stated during the past few years that the cause of the misfortunes during the early stages of the war in South Africa was the failure of the Intelligence Department. It was evident now that it was not the Intelligence Department that failed to supply information to the Government, but the Government that, for some inexplicable reason, refused to avail themselves of that information. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham said they were obliged to differentiate between fact and opinion, but it should be remembered that nearly everything they got from the Intelligence Department was opinion. How were they going to differentiate fact from opinion in the case of the Intelligence Department? It seemed to him that what had occurred was not the fault of the Army; he was prepared to go so far as to say that it was not even the fault of the War Office. The breakdown was due to the want of a policy on the part of the Government. That had been made clear by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. The responsibility for the mistakes which had been made must rest on the Cabinet collectively, and especially on the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Hon. Members might feel certain that if we had the most perfect Army and the most perfect War Office in the world there would be a breakdown, unless we had at the same time a Government with a definite policy.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said it so happened that he was in Johannesburg in the critical months of August and September before the war, and it would be wrong of him if he did not say distinctly that our preparations were not sufficient. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham that it was extremely difficult to prepare for war, and at the same time convey to the Boers the idea that we desired to prevent war. He regretted, however, that we did not take greater steps to safeguard the country at that time. But everything showed that the Government were most anxious not to do anything which could suggest a threat. He thought they went too far in that way. The mover of the Amendment had referred to the certainty that the Orange Free State would join the Transvaal in the event of war. When in Johannesburg he took an interest in that subject, and he could emphatically say that, as to the action of the Orange Free State, the most competent authorities were in doubt up to the last moment. He had no hesitation in saying that there were two special reasons which determined the action of the Transvaal. The telegram of the Emperor of Germany had given the Boers immense encouragement, and they believed that they would have the support of at least one European State; and another influence unquestionably was that of the speeches of the

Opposition, which were reprinted and circulated broadcast in South Africa. Those speeches were one of the greatest incentives to war. He remembered the arrival of the troops from India, and he could say that they did arrive in time, their arrival causing intense relief at a critical moment. He was greatly impressed by the appearance of the troops, and he suggested to the Governor of the Colony that they should be paraded in mass for the purpose of impressing the Boers, but the emergency was so great that this could not be done, and the men were entrained and sent up to Pietermaritzburg immediately on landing. Looking back over those events, he thought it was a pity that they should be made matters of recrimination. They must look to the future and see that something was done to prevent a recurrence of the mistakes which had admittedly been made. He joined the public service after the close of the Crimean War. There was talk then of reforming the War Office. The reform had been going on ever since, but it would appear from the disclosures that had been made that the work was not yet complete. He believed that it would have been impossible for the Transvaal to develop as it should do under the government of President Kruger. He believed that greater happiness and prosperity for that country would ensue as a consequence of the war.

Mr. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk, Mid) said that the failure of the Government to provide adequate guns, rifles, and ammunition was an indication of the general inefficiency of its arrangements. They were told yesterday that in the midst of the war the Government had to buy 108 quick-firing guns in Germany. The Boer Republics had those modern guns; England with its great resources had none. The Boers had provided themselves with pom-poms from England. We had none, and English-made guns were turned upon our soldiers. In February, 1900, he himself called the attention of the then Under-Secretary for War to the incorrect sighting of the rifles with which our troops were armed. The defect was made light of, treated as rather theoretical than practical, but General Brackenbury in his evidence said that the discovery was "an awful blow." The Government reserve of rifle cartridges at the time of the war consisted in the main of hollow-nosed bullets, and it became a serious question whether they did not come within the provisions of the Hague Convention. Partly on this ground, and partly because when the rifle was foul they were apt to break up prematurely, 66,000,000 of them were discarded. For these reasons, if for no others, he thought the Government preparations must be condemned.

Mr. ROBSON (South Shields) May I, with the permission of the House, make a statement, which is in the nature of a personal explanation, with regard to a criticism passed last night by the ex-Colonial Secretary upon what I had said as to the evidence of Sir William Butler? I had stated that in his evidence Sir William Butler had mentioned 80,000 to 100,000 men as being the force which might be required if the Transvaal were to be annexed. The right hon. Gentleman said in reference to that—

> "The hon. and learned Member produced a statement which amazed me, that Sir William Butler had said that 80,000 to 100,000 men would be required. When did Sir William Butler say that? He did not say anything of the kind."

The right hon. Gentleman went on to hint that I had not fairly treated the House in relation to that statement. Now, Sir, without comment, I will read what General Butler did say in his evidence. In answer to a question as to the report that he had given 100,000 men as being the necessary number that would be required, he says—

> "There is no document in evidence of that, but I stated 100,000 men over and over again. To be more particular, I stated 80,000 irrespective of the lines of communication, and the thing was growing. I was asked by a very high authority early in May"

that is the authority the right hon. Gentlemen himself cited—

> "if it was necessary to bring pressure on the Boers with reference to some political questions, such as the franchise, could the existing force in South Africa be of any use if moved towards the frontier? I laughed openly at the idea. 'No,' I said, 'the existing force in South Africa could only hold a few positions, which I have in my mind, until reinforcements arrive, and to bring pressure on the Dutch Republic at least 40,000 men will be required.'"

[Laughter and cheers.] Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite had better wait—

> "That was early in May—a sudden, offhand question, nothing more. As things went on, I put that number very much higher, and I said to my staff, '80,000 men exclusive of the lines of communication,' and that was nothing wonderful as the Dutch were writing to that effect at the time."

The House had an impression that I had in some way attempted to mislead it. The suggestion ought never to have been made and ought now to be withdrawn.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): I am not competent, and I have no desire, to defend the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in his presence, but when he happens to be absent I think it is my privilege to continue the quotation which the hon. Member opposite has produced, apparently with the intention of confuting the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. I can find no more pertinent confirmation of the charge, if it be a charge, which my right hon. friend produced last night than the sequel to the passage which the hon. and learned Gentleman has quoted. What was the gist, the whole point, of my right hon. friend's remark? He said that Sir William Butler, an officer for whom I may say I have the most profound and sincere respect, being the officer in command of the troops in South Africa, advised the Executive Government that in his opinion a force of 40,000 men was sufficient for the purpose of putting pressure on the Dutch Republics. The hon. and learned Gentleman interrupted and said that on some other occasion he made some other remark. My right hon. friend said—

> "I will not do Sir William Butler the injustice of supposing that, if he knew that a larger force than that was necessary, he failed to perform the primary duty of a general in command and inform his Government."

Now what is the sequel? The hon. and learned Member stopped at the end of question 13,506. The next question is this—

> "Did you put that in an official document of any sort? Answer—I do not know that I put it into any official document."

MR. ROBSON: I must ask the right hon. Gentleman to deal fairly with the point between myself and the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. I stated in my speech that Sir William Butler had said this to members of his staff. That was the observation I made. That was the observation which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham said did not exist.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am within the recollection of the House, and I ask whether that is the meaning of a statement made in a debate on the Address—on a vote of censure on the Government—when the hon. and learned Member gets up and reproaches the Government with not having sent more troops because their own general in the field said they ought to send more. I have not done. The next question which I think the hon. Member might have read is this.

MR. ROBSON: I will read it all if you like.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, I think the time is not long enough. But I will read it.

> "Sir John Edge—Did you inform the Government or the War Office? Answer—No, in fact I waited to be asked my numbers."

I ask the House whether the hon. and learned Member's presentation of his own defence just now was a full and adequate presentation of the facts.

I think I have said enough about what, after all, is an unimportant point. I address the House with some reluctance upon this question at all. My position is a peculiar one. I am not personally acquainted with the transactions which have been discussed during this debate; I am not personally responsible for them. I cannot deny that there have been occasions on which I have expressed opinions which have committed me to certain views with respect to them. I hold those views still. I do feel, nevertheless, that nothing I have said disqualifies me from expressing a very clear opinion as to the discussion which has taken place and as to the view which the House is invited to take with regard to this Amendment. I believe that the Opposition has once more misunderstood the whole feeling of the country. The hon. and learned Member for South Shields rebuked me with having said that in my opinion the country did not greatly care about the question he has raised and which he has placed before the House with so much ability. I am bound to say that if at the beginning of this discussion I thought, as I did, that the country does not very greatly care to reopen this long-past matter, that it does not really very greatly care about the minute details which the hon. and gallant Member for Newington discussed with so much propriety, but not, I think, with very great relevance; I think so still. But I think that the country does care very much about a matter which has been touched upon very little during the course of this debate—namely, the condition of affairs at the present time and the condition of affairs as it may be in the future. It may be alleged that I have committed myself to much that has been said by hon. Members, whether on the other side of the House or on this side. I have not been in the habit of going back on my own opinion, and nothing has occurred to induce me to do so now. It may indeed be possible to learn a wise lesson from the views which seem to be common among hon. Members on both sides. But I do think there has been an enormous amount of serious exaggeration and misapplication of the lessons taught in the Blue-book. I was interested and gratified to hear the soldiers defended from that side of the House. It was a new and pleasant experience. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh," and MINISTERIAL cheers.] I am not speaking of all hon. Members opposite, but I have a very keen and painful recollection of the opinions I have heard expressed about our officers, and about our soldiers, from hon. Members on the other side of the House. [AN HON. MEMBER: Methods of barbarism.] I shall make no personal allusions. I am only too delighted that we have now come to a saner frame of mind, and that the merits and capacities of our soldiers, whether officers commanding or privates, are coming to be recognised by hon. Members opposite as they ought to be.

It does not become me to discuss in any detail what I may call the diplomatic side of this question. There has been a great deal said, and effectually answered, on this side in respect to the diplomatic proceedings which took place before the commencement of the late war. I have never been quite able to understand the disclaimer of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. He has told us that he really did not in any way contribute to these diplomatic difficulties, and he has explained, or endeavoured to explain, a phrase which has very often, and I think justly, been quoted against him. I was at that time in no way responsible for the Army or for the diplomatic proceedings, but I have refreshed my memory, and I have informed myself of what the right hon. Gentleman did say. Although I do not want to enter into any recriminations, I say this—that if I had been a soldier serving in the field, or if I had been a member of the Transvaal Legislature at the time when the right hon. Member spoke, I should have put only one interpretation on what he said, and I should have agreed that that interpretation was the same which would be put upon it by any sane man in this country or out of it. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to a second edition—a revised version—of the remarks attributed to him. I have the original report which appeared in an Essex paper on the morrow of the speech. This is what the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "There are some newspapers which talk freely of the probability and even the necessity of war, and the public mind has been distracted in consequence. I think it right to say plainly that I for my part can discern nothing in what has occurred to justify either warlike action or military preparations."

I turn to another column of that same Essex paper on that same day, and I find that the whole of the remarks were straightway telegraphed to South Africa. [OPPOSITION cries of "Why not?"] Very well, why not? Now, I cannot but believe that if it had been the object of the right hon. Gentleman to encourage those who were intending war against us, no better means could have been devised for the purpose. An hon. Member says

"Why not?" I will tell him why not. I heard the hon. and learned Member for South Shields make his attack on the Government. One of the things which impressed me most in his able speech, was his admission, from start to finish of that speech of the, proposition for which we have always been contending—that the Boer Republics were preparing for war, that they meant war and were bent upon war, and that we ought to have expected nothing but war. That was the argument he adduced in order to strengthen his attack on the Government and I admit the logical consistency, but what about the speech of the right hon. Gentleman when he knew that war was being contemplated and that war was in preparation against the country to which he belonged?

I pass to another phase of the question. It is made a matter of reproach against the Government that they were not prepared for this emergency for which the hon. and learned Member says they ought to have been prepared. My opinion would coincide with that of the hon. and gallant Member for Taunton, who said our Army system was to blame for the position in which we then found ourselves. The hon. and gallant Member for Bristol spoke of the preparedness of the Boers. He said that within two days they had mobilised and crossed the frontier. It was perfectly true that they did make an aggressive advance against our colonies. What was our position when this war broke out? It was a position in which the Army system had invariably placed us. It was a position absolutely different from that which is occupied by any other European country. In the first place we cannot send any force into action without mobilising the Army. That is not a new thing. That is part of the system which was invented by hon. Members opposite, which has been cultivated by hon. Members opposite, and which is now defended by hon. Members opposite; and let me point out that mobilisation must have taken place, and did take place, 8,000 miles from the military front. The hon. Member cites to us the action of the Boers. Does he really suggest that it would have been in the interests of peace, for which the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was so curiously anxious—and to which he contributed so little—that it would have been of any assistance to the negotiations if we had mobilised the whole of the Army Reserve three months before the date at which war was declared? No, Sir, I draw a totally different lesson from the words of the hon. and learned Member for South Shields and the hon. Member for Bristol. It has been pointed out that when the war began we had no troops that we were able to send without mobilising the Army. The Report of the Commission has demonstrated in unmistakable language that another brigade might have turned the fortunes of the war in Natal. Is the hon. Member who dwelt on this subject prepared to give us that brigade in future? There are two things which are needed before you can enable a martial nation to give effect to its power at the outbreak of war. There is preparation in the matter of men; there is preparation in the matter of money. Both these things, the Commissioners pointed out, we ought to have. Never yet have we had either. The authority of the House of Commons is paramount. We cannot spend a shilling without the authority of the House of Commons. Does the hon. and learned Member suggest that it would have been well for the Government to come down at the time these negotiations were being conducted and ask for a credit of £10,000,000 sterling to fight the Transvaal? Does he suggest that it would have been well for the Secretary for War to have issued a proclamation in the Queen's name to embody the Reserve? What is the alternative? The alternative is always to have a force adequate to the needs of this country, and possibly a sum available for the utilisation of that force. I think I am right in saying that in the corners of this Report we find recommendations of that character. We find recommendations, put, no doubt, with great moderation, that this country assign to the Executive Government a fund which would enable it to prepare for war without the publicity which necessarily accompanies a Vote of Parliament. Does the hon. and learned Member agree with that proposition? If so, I look upon him no longer as an opponent, but as an ally. I quite agree that that is a remedy for the disease we all know to exist. But these defects are part of our Army system—inherent in it. They have been part of our Army system for years and years, and if anybody has done anything to mend that system it is certainly not the Party opposite.

I claim the support of the hon. and gallant Member in a reform of which I think he has justly pointed out the importance, but I cannot go further, when he comes to speak of matters of supply, clothing, and transport. I believe that he struck an entirely false note with regard to these matters. I think, perhaps, if he had studied as much as some of us have studied the history of other wars in other lands he would have been cautious before he ventured upon a denunciation of the performances of our auxiliary departments during the late war. It is perfectly true that there was a depletion of our stores, and I have spoken very strongly about what I considered were the steps which ought to have been taken to set that right; but when it is said that there was great dereliction of duty in supplying the necessary stores and provisions to the troops in the field, he goes far beyond the fact, and he goes far beyond the authority given to him in the Report of the Royal Commission. I believe there was a great, an unreasonable, a wrong depletion of our stores at the beginning of the war. I know perfectly well that it was true before the war, and much more true of many a year anterior to that time. But it is not the fact that our troops were without the necessaries, I may almost say the luxuries, of life during that campaign. I honestly believe that never was an army in the field better supplied from start to finish with everything that was necessary for the clothing, the feeding, equipment, and arming of the men. I admit that those supplies were furnished under circumstances of which we have no reason to be proud, and I think we ran very near to the point of danger. In some respects we passed it. But, admitting that, I think a little credit should be given to those who repaired that error in the face of an emergency. It would have completed the story if the hon. and learned Member had told us that, barring the accidents of war, the fighting, and the marching, which are incidents of every campaign, the troops were never without food. No army was ever so well fed. As to the clothing, too, although the clothing which was adapted to the climate was lacking at first, it was supplied in time for the troops to get the benefit of it. That the transport, which had to perform its duties in a country where distances are reckoned, not by miles or scores of miles, but by hundreds of miles, where railways in war time are practically non-existent, or where they exist, make an enormous extra demand upon the Army—that that transport succeeded in practically never being a day behind the troops for the benefit of which it existed is a fact to be proud of.

Now, Sir, let me say a word about guns, There, again, I venture to think the hon. Member has gone a little beyond the facts. It is true that there is need for reformation in our artillery material, but I think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean is a little in advance of the facts on this point. I am sure the House will recognise the value of any statements he may make and that he has been a most impartial critic in these matters, and has earned the goodwill of both services in that respect. Therefore, I hesitate to dispute any allegation he may make; but when he told us that the Boers had 120 quick-firing guns, and that in that was to be found the mark of the inadequacy of our supply of guns, I think he went a little in advance of the facts.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: The statement I made I believe to be true. It was not my own statement. I quoted it from the notes of the Prussian Staff on the war.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I have read that statement, and I think there is some confusion of fact in it. The fact is that the number of quick-firing field guns was exceedingly small, though the number was in advance of our own, for this reason. There was no country in Europe, with the possible exception of France, which at that time had a quick-firing field gun; but it was possible for a small State to buy a fancy article, and the Boer States did so. But they bought a very much smaller number than the right hon. Gentleman suggested. It would have been a very serious undertaking for us to have armed ourselves with what I call this embryo quick-firing gun which no European country possessed. France did possess something approaching a quick-firing gun, but Germany did not, Russia did not, and we did not. I believe we have gained greatly by the postponement of the operation of re-arming our artillery, and, if I am permitted to ask the House to sanction expenditure this year, I believe I shall be able to prove that as the result of that postponement we shall get a much better gun. It is undoubtedly true, and there is undoubtedly force in the allegation that in respect of heavy guns we were out-classed at the beginning of the war by the heavy guns in the possession of the Boers. We were only then beginning to realise what one or two Governments, notably the Russian and the French Governments, had realised—that these heavy guns can with advantage be taken into the field. We suffered, but I do not think to anything like the extent that the hon. and learned Member opposite has suggested. I think the general artillery view is that the material damage done by these guns was small, and that the effect of our guns was quite as great as could be possibly expected, considering the country in which they were operating and the obstacles to which they were opposed. I do not believe, as a matter of fact, that the introduction of quick-firing guns would have made any substantial difference in the progress of the war. But I admit that it would have been wise and provident if we had gone a little in advance of military opinion of the time and had furnished our Army with a certain number of heavier guns. We were not, after all, so very inadequately provided with artillery in the war. We began with 91 guns. We ended up with 752, and I am unable to credit that the organisation at home could have been so bad as it has been described if, during the progress of the war, it could increase the number of guns from 91 to 752.

The peroration of the hon. Member for Camberwell was undoubtedly eloquent, but he pitched in a very false note. He spoke of the bones of men whitening in South Africa, of hearts made sad, and of many homes darkened because the supplies which ought to have been furnished to our troops were not forthcoming. That is a false note. It is not a fact. I do not believe, if you went through the whole of the regiments which so cheerfully bore the inevitable privations of the campaign, you would find they adopted such an attitude at any period of the war. There were losses, lamentable losses. I do not care to apportion the responsibility for those losses, but I would say that principally they were due to the fact that with an army unspecialised for the task it had to perform we were fighting an army thoroughly specialised in their own country. But granting every loss, I believe that no modern campaign has ever been conducted in which there was so small a proportion of avoidable losses as there was in this campaign. If any hon. Member had gone as I have gone in the footsteps of the armies in the Franco-German and the Russo-Turkish Wars, then he would have understood what is meant by the losses which overtake armies in the field, due to causes such as were described by the hon. Member for Camberwell.

Well, Sir, we are asked to take our example from the other side. We are told we ought to have been more provident, that we ought to have foreseen the number of men that would be required to terminate this war. We were told that the Government of the day estimated that an Army of 70,000 or 80,000 men would be sufficient, and that we did not foresee that 250,000 men would eventually have to be put in the field. Let me say a word on that. The hon. Member pointed out that the addition to the numbers originally calculated was the necessary penalty we paid for our want of success in the first weeks of the campaign. That is perfectly true, but I can recall a campaign which is famous, or infamous, and which is usually called the surrender of Majuba. I have never had any reason to doubt that what took place then was that the officer in command of the troops had positive orders to make no terms with the enemy until he had defeated them. But what happened? The enemy defeated him, and, within a day or two, orders were sent to make peace. I quite admit that in that case no addition was necessary to the numbers originally sent out. That is the analogy we are asked to follow.

SIR JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street): That is not correct. I myself heard Lord Kimberley make the statement that orders were sent to make terms of peace before Majuba.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I adhere to the opinion that my information is correct. But I quote the case as an example of what ought to be avoided in making war. It is true there were failures, which we all regret. Our soldiers fought bravely, and if they were defeated, and because they were defeated, we had to send out more men until we achieved success. That was done then, and I hope it will always be done when a British Army is in the field. So far from having anything to apologise for, I think the Government of the day ought to be congratulated because they had the determination to insist that the war should be carried through to the bitter end, and that the honour of the British Army should be re-established. We are asked to censure the Government because they failed to prepare the Army for war. I have been, perhaps, occasionally rather a stormy petrel in these military waters, and I have not always been in agreement with my Party, but I have been a very careful, and I hope a very impartial, student of the history of the War Office and the Army during late years. I challenge contradiction from any hon. Member when I say that what has been done for the Army by the present Administration is incomparably in advance of anything that has been done in the whole of the last twenty years by the Party opposite. Hon. Members opposite laugh. I wonder how many of them know. I believe I have earned a cheer now and then by enlarging on this subject, but when I spoke I did not speak altogether without knowledge. We are asked now to give a verdict on the Blue-book. It is not the first Blue-book, nor the tenth, nor the hundredth—my shelves are piled with Blue-books which have recorded the failures of the past, and principally of the Party opposite. [AN HON. MEMBER: Oh!] I do not think the hon. Member who objects has any real recollection of the facts. I have the most painful recollection. I have been through them all, analysed and annotated them, and know of what I speak. They have one common characteristic. I do not desire to draw a distinction between this and that Party. I have always said the same thing, that these Blue-books have been sterile, that they have produced no result whatever, and that, while condemnation of our system has been persistent, action to improve our system has been non-existent. But now we have this Blue-book, on which the Opposition desires to base their indictment. Has it anything in common with any of these previous Reports? Nothing. I will differentiate in a sentence. The lessons which that Blue-book has taught have been learnt. Action has not been deferred, indeed, till that Blue-book was issued. I suppose I cannot appeal to hon. Members opposite, but I do appeal to hon. Members on this side to say whether I am right or wrong in declaring that in this matter the Government is entitled to a verdict, because they have not failed to take those lessons to heart.

What are the lessons? We are told that we needed stores; we have got them. My right hon. friend the Secretary of State for India said truly that it was the first care of the Administration of which he was at that time a member to supply stores for the Navy, and I can bear testimony by visual evidence that these stores exist, and that there never was a time in the history of the British Navy when the supplies of the Navy were in a better condition than they are at this moment. I can now bear testimony to a similar state of things with regard to the British Army. Ten million pounds was asked for and voted by this House; that £10,000,000, with some inappreciable exceptions, will be expended by the end of this year, and value will be received for it. I could take hon. Members to storehouse after storehouse where they would see these stores in their places, ready for any emergency. That is very different from what has happened as the result of any of these voluminous inquiries which have taken place before. Criticism was directed to the Remount Department; the hon. Member said it was undermanned considering the amount it had to administer. But do not accept that too readily. The Transport Department of the Navy administered £32,000,000, and I am not aware that its *personnel* is very much greater than that of the Remount Department. Judge the work not by cost, but by quality. But the Remount Department was in need of extension; we were taught how a great emergency might arise such as had never been contemplated before, and we have now provided against that emergency if it should recur. As to the new armaments required, a vast proportion of the fixed armaments of this country have already been provided, and, if I am permitted, I am in a position now to ask the House of Commons to sanction the introduction of new armament for the artillery which, I believe, will place us in advance of any country in Europe.

A great deal has been said about the Intelligence Department. I should like, as one who, for a short time, has had the privilege of working in close touch with the Department, to bear my testimony to the value of the work it has done and is capable of doing. But I have been one of those, I think, who have always said that there was room for great extension in the organisation of the Intelligence Department. That Department has been extended, and if I have the honour of occupying this office much longer, it will be still further extended. We have been challenged because we did not provide enough manœuvring grounds for the troops; there has been more done in this respect during the last three years under the administration of my right hon. friend than during the previous thirty years. We have been told that the Army is over-centralised, and that from that springs half its evils. Never has the Army been as decentralised as it is at this moment. We are told that the War Office ought to be reorganised. Well, I think it will be admitted that we have not been slow to learn the lessons of the Commission, and that we are doing what we can;—we can only do it with the cordial support of this House, and of both sides of the House—to reorganise the constitution of the War Office and make it even more efficient.

There are things we have not done, and we have got to learn lessons from this discussion. We have not yet filled up that *hiatus* to which many hon. Members have referred. We have not yet got this striking force which will relieve us from the painful and dangerous position we were in when the last war broke out. We have not yet reorganised the Army in a way which will ensure the continuance of recruiting and enable us to get full value out of the splendid material we possess, but we have gone very far in the direction of progress. This House is asked to pronounce a vote of censure upon the Government, which has, I suppose, made the kind of mistake which I think I have shown is common to every Party which has sat in this House, of not understanding that the military needs of this country are great, and that they can only be met by forethought and scientific organisation. But it is a Government which, having learnt a sharp lesson in the school of experience, has applied itself as no Government ever applied itself before, to giving practical effect to that lesson, and therefore there ought to be no choice at all. If this House, aye, and the country, which has been appealed to, really desires to put its military arrangements on a satisfactory basis, if it desires to continue this work, which I believe has been well begun, then it will do, what I am confident the House will do, give a negative to the Amendment.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 192; Noes, 278. (Division List, No. 1.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbt. Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson.
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Partick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies M. Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway)
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt. E. C(S. Andrw's Bghs
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Field, William
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F
Furness, Sir Christopher
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant. Corrie
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir William
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, W. (Carnarvonshire)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Patrick James
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph

Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mellor, Rt. Hon. John William
Mooney, John J.
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt Hn John (Montrose)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N)
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, M)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R., Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, D. A. (Merthyr)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Walton, J. Lawson (Leeds, S.
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay, T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, F. W. (Norfolk, Mid)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T., Huddersf'd
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES, Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banes, Major George Edward
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Beckett, Ernest William
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir J. Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon, Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Hart
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William

Gordon, Hn. J.E.(Elgin&Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets)
Gore, Hon. S. F.Ormsby-(Linc)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, SirE.W.B'ry S.Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt.HnLordG. Midd'x
Hamilton, Marq.of, L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F.Leverton, Tynemouth
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich)
Hay, Hon, Claude George
Heath, James (Staffords., N.W)
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A.(Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hobhouse, Rt.HnH., Somers'tE.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hozier, Hon. J. Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N.R.)
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kenyon, Hon.Geo. T.(Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (Salop
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir J. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N.R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. CharlesW.(Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lucas, Reginald J.(Portsmouth)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt.Hn.SirH.E., Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh)
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. W.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, Ed. (Fermanagh, N.)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ridley, Hon.M.W. (Stalybridge)
Ridley, S. Forde, Bethnal Green
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Charles T.
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. Edw.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hon. Arthur, Ormskirk
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt.Hn. J.G. (Oxf'd Univ
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col.Sir C. E.H., Sheff'd
Vincent, Sir Edgar (Exeter)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col.A.C.E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts)
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, RtHnJPowell- (Birm.
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn.E.R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES, Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Main Question again proposed.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned"—(*Mr. Joseph Walton*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Adjourned at twenty-three minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 8th February, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [H.L.]; Barrow-in-Furness Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Belfast and North East Ireland Electricity and Power Gas Bill [H.L.]; Belfast Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]; Bridlington Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Buxton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Chesterfield Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]; Chesterfield Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Derwent Valley Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Ebbw Vale Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Edwardes Square Protection Bill [H.L.]; Elysée Palace Hotel Company Bill [H.L.]; Filey Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Great Yarmouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Harrogate Waterworks Tramroad Bill [H.L.]; Holywood Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]; Hutcheson's Hospital and Hutcheson's Educational Trust Bill [H.L.]; Ipswich Dock Commission Bill [H.L.]; King's College Hospital Bill [H.L.]; Leeds Corporation (Waterworks) Railway Bill [H.L.]; Liverpool and Wigan Churches Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Maidenhead Bridge Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation (General Powers) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Milwr and District Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Minehead Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Oakengates, Dawley, and District Joint Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Preston and Blackburn Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Preston Corporation Water Bill [H.L.]; St. Bartholomew's Hospital Bill [H.L.]; St. Mary Woolnoth Bill [H.L.]; Shipley Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Stretford Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Corporation Bill [H.L.] Ulster Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Weaver Navigation (Additional Finance) Bill [H.L.]; Weaver Navigation (Constitution and Finance) Bill [H.L.]; Withnell Gas Bill [H.L.]. Presented, and read 1ª.

Alexandra (Newport and South Wales) Docks and Railway Bill [H.L.]; Barnard Castle Gas Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Extension of Time, etc.) Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Gosport Water Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Isle of Thanet Light Railways Bill [H.L.]; Lancashire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]; London Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Ship Canal Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Ship Canal (Finance) Bill [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan Railway Bill [H.L.]; Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle and Gateshead Water Bill [H.L.]; New River Company Bill [H.L.]; New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company Bill [H.L.]; North Wales Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway Bill [H.L.]; Southport and Lytham Tramroad (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Ticehurst and District Water and Gas Bill [H.L.]; Trafford Park Dock and Railway Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Victoria University of Manchester Bill [H.L.]; Victoria University of Yorkshire Bill [H.L.]; West Metropolitan Railway (Abandonment) Bill [H.L.]; West Metropolitan Railway (Extension of Time) Bill [H.L.]; Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [H.L.]; West Riding Tramways Bill [H.L.]; York Town and Blackwater Gas Bill [H.L.]; Presented; read 1ª; and referred to the Examiners.

COULSDON TRAMWAYS BILL.

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the Promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL).

No. 3118. Italy (South Italy); No. 3119. Denmark.

NAVY.

Returns of the number of courts-martial held and summary punishments inflicted on seamen of the Royal Navy, etc., during the year 1902.

GREENWICH OBSERVATORY.

Report of the Astronomer-Royal to the Board of Visitors of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, read at the annual visitation of the Royal Observatory, 6th June, 1903.

INDIA.

(Thibet): Papers relating to Thibet; (Tariff): Views of the Government of India on the question of Preferential Tariffs.

TRANSVAAL.

Telegraphic correspondence relating to the Transvaal Labour Importation Ordinance, with Appendix; the Ordinance as amended in accordance with telegrams (in continuation of [Cd. 1895], Feb., 1904).

ARMY (IMPERIAL YEOMANRY).

Training Return of Imperial Yeomanry in Great Britain and Ireland for 1903.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland for the year ended 31st December, 1902; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon.

SUPERANNUATION—TREASURY MINUTES.

Dated 12th August, 1903, granting a retired allowance to Theophilus Evans, inspector of postmen and telegraph messengers, Worcester Post Office.

Dated 2nd October, 1903, granting a retired allowance to Commander Francis Alford, Navigating Commander H.M.T.S. "Monarch" Post Office.

Dated 19th October, 1903, granting a retired allowance to Charles Hasdell, third-class clerk in the Engineer-in-Chief's Department, Post Office.

Dated 19th October, 1903, granting a retired allowance to James Ruttley, late overseer and senior telegraphist, Central Telegraph Office, London.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

RICHMOND BRIDGE.

Account of the Commissioners of Richmond Bridge for the year ended 25th December, 1902. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

POST OFFICE (TELEGRAPHS).

Account showing the gross amount received, and the gross amount expended, in respect of the Telegraph Service from the date of the transfer of the telegraphs to the State to the 31st day of March, 1902 (in continuation of No. 31, of Session 1903). The Order of Thursday last, that the said account do lie on the Table, discharged.

House adjourned at Four o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 8th February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz:—Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill; Gomersal Gas Bill; Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill; South Shields Gas Bill; South-Western and

Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Sutton Gas Bill; Whitby Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz:—Bishop's Stortford and District Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has not been complied with, viz:—Ryde Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PETITIONS.

CONFESSIONAL AT ST. PAUL'S, BEDFORD.

Petition from Bedford, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law: from Camden Town; Barrow-in-Furness; Moss Side; Fowey; Maerdy; Cargreen; Bradford; Blackwood; Woodside; Sutcombe; Eastnor; Govan (three); Bedford; Stewarton; Ardrossan; Blackpool; West Bridgford; Southampton (two); Northumberland; Bedlington Colliery; Martock; Pembroke; Kilwinning; Mottram; Glossop (two); Clifton; Bishopsgate; Beuhar; Thorniewood; Motherwell; Holytown; Shotts; Skelton; Bellshill; New Stevenston; Craigneuk; Greenock; Torry; Rochester; Newcastle; Bates Cottages; Ashbourne; Clapham Road; Blackburn (two); Woolston; Ormskirk; Prescot; Crainford; Crawford; Waterloo; Hatton; Preston-on-the-Hill; Stockton Heath; Wilmslow; Lostock Gralam; Boxmoor Hall; Strickland; Great Ayton; Higher Broughton and Hoghton; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST INDIA (TARIFFS).

Copy presented, of Views of the Government of India on the question of Preferential Tariffs [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PILOTAGE.

Copy presented, of Abstract of Returns relating to Pilots and Pilotage in the United Kingdom (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 312, of Session 1902) as furnished by the various Pilotage Authorities [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 33.]

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES.

Copy presented, of Statements of Accounts, and of Life Assurance and Annuity Business and Abstracts of Actuarial Reports, deposited with the Board of Trade during the year ended 31st December, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 34.]

ARMY (IMPERIAL YEOMANRY).

Copy presented, of Training Return o Imperial Yeomanry for 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COMMONS ACT, 1876 (OXSHOTT HEATH‘ SURREY).

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries upon an application for a Provisional Order for the regulation of Oxshott Heath, in the parish of Cobham, in the county of Surrey [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 35.]

COMMONS ACT, 1876 (MERROW DOWNS, SURREY).

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries upon an application for a Provisional Order for the regulation of Merrow Downs, in the parish of Merrow, in the county of Surrey [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 36.]

DESTRUCTIVE INSECTS ACT, 1877.

Copy presented, of an Order dated the 13th October, 1903, revoking the Orders of the Board of Agriculture under the Act dated respectively the 22nd August, 1901, the 31st May, 1902, and the 5th June, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BREWERS' LICENCES.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 5th February; *Mr. Victor Cavendish*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 37.]

CONSOLIDATED FUND.

Abstract Account presented, showing the issues made from the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom in the financial year ended 31st March, 1903, for the Interest and Management of the Debt, for the Civil List, and for all other Issues in the financial year for services charged directly on the said Fund; with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 38.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 12th August, 1903, granting to Theophilus Evans, Inspector of Postmen and Telegraph Messengers, Worcester Post Office, a retiring allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 19th October, 1903, granting to Charles Hasdell, 3rd Class Clerk in the Engineer in Chief's Department, Post Office, a retiring allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3118 to 3120 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 19th October, 1903, granting to James Ruttley, late Overseer and Senior Telegraphist, Central Telegraph Office, London, a retiring allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 2nd October, 1903, granting to Commander Francis Alford, Navigating Commander H.M.T.S. "Monarch," Post Office, a retiring allowance under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT THREE PER CENT. GUARANTEED STOCK.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 1st November, 1903, guaranteeing the payment of interest and repayment of principal of the Transvaal Government Three per Cent. Guaranteed Stock [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

COMMITTALS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Returns from the Clerks of the Crown and Peace of the number of persons committed for trial in 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Lunacy.—Copy of Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of Visits made and the number of Patients seen by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ending on the 31st December, 1903 [by Act].

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Deputations of Dockyard Trades.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether it is the intention of the Board to receive deputations representing the various trades in His Majesty's dockyards this year in continuance of those granted last year.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The Board visited the dockyards at Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Chatham during last financial year for the purpose of receiving deputations; and Pembroke and Sheerness will be similarly visited this year. It is not proposed to visit every yard every year.

Registrar General's Returns—Grouping of Counties.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that in the Registrar General's Returns the statistical figures are given for each English county separately, whereas in the case of Wales six counties are grouped together; and whether he will take steps to have these figures published for each Welsh county separately.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have communicated with the Registrar General and find that it will not be practicable to give the statistical figures referred to for each Welsh county separately in his next Annual Report which is now in the printer's hands; but the form of the tables in his future Reports and quarterly Returns will be altered so as to include the information desired by the hon. Member.

Indebtedness of Borough Councils.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): To ask the President of the Local Government Board when he expects to lay upon the Table the Return of indebtedness of borough councils ordered by the House on the 24th June, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) There has been some difficulty in procuring the information required, and some of the returns are still outstanding, although repeated applications have been made for them. Further, after the returns have been received, additional particulars have had to be applied for in a large number of cases. The information obtained is being sent to the printers as rapidly as possible, and every effort will be made to complete and present the Return at the earliest date practicable.

Return of Electric Lighting Acts.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will lay upon the Table a Return showing the names of companies or persons who have obtained Acts conveying powers for the supply of electric power to districts, with the names and areas of such districts, and the year in which the powers were obtained, and whether such powers have been exercised or not; and, in the former case, what is the state of the works constructed under such powers.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I have given instructions for the preparation of this Return, but as the information asked for in the latter part of the hon. Member's Question is not at present in the possession of the Board of Trade, it will be necessary to communicate with the companies, etc., on the subject before the Return can be completed.

Customs Duty—Tobacco for Personal Consumption.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade by what authority Customs officers refuse to accept from the master of a British ship the duty spontaneously tendered by him in respect of tobacco brought by such master to this country for his own use, unless he pays an additional sum or fine of 1s.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Under Section 42 of the Customs Consolidation Act, 1876, as amended by The Finance Act, 1896, tobacco contained in packages of less than 80 lbs. gross weight is, for the safety of the revenue, prohibited to be imported into the United Kingdom, and if so imported is liable to forfeiture; but by ancient custom small parcels may be cleared on payment of duty and a regulated fine varying from 3d. to 1s. 3d. the pound according to the description of the tobacco, and whether or not it is entered on the importing ship's report. Masters and members of ships' crews are not and never have been entitled to any exemption from these regulations in respect of small quantities of tobacco brought by them into this country.

Congestion of Business at the Law Courts.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask Mr. Attorney-General whether his attention has been called to the congestion of business in the London Law Courts, and will he consider the practicability of rearranging the circuits with a view to the retention of the services of one or two additional Judges in London.

(*Answered by Sir Robert Finlay.*) I have ascertained that there is no exceptional congestion of business in the Royal Courts of Justice. The general condition of business is much better than it has been for some time past, though there are a larger number of common juries waiting for hearing than usual, which has been occasioned by the illness and temporary absence of some of the Judges. No rearrangement of the circuits would enable two or even one additional Judge to be available for sittings in London for any substantial time unless arrangements were made either to diminish the number of circuits or to group the counties on alternate circuits. Many serious objections have been raised to both these proposals, which have been under constant consideration during the last ten years. It is right to point out that the present number of Judges in the King's Bench Division leaves no margin or reserve whatever for illness or temporary absence.

Consols Bought and Sold under Public Buildings Expenses Act, 1898.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether any of the Consols stated in the Fourth Report of the Public Accounts Committee last year to have been bought under The Public Buildings Expenses Act, 1898, have been sold since the 31st March, 1903; and, if so, what was the amount of those sales, the average price at which the sales were effected, and the loss thereby incurred.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The Consols sold from the Public Buildings Expenses Fund since the 31st March, 1903, amount to £464,104 14s. 1d. The average price obtained was 90·28 per cent., and the loss on these transactions £89,061 13s. 10d.

Indian and Australian Mail Delays.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the repeated and serious delays which occur in the delivery of newspapers and other book matter by the Indian and Australian mails viâ Brindisi, particularly when the mail arrives on Saturdays; whether he will state at what hour the Indian mail arrived in London on Saturday, 30th January, and at what hour the first delivery of newspapers by that mail was made by express delivery, and by ordinary course of post; whether he is aware that some of the newspapers by that mail had not been delivered in London by 11 o'clock on Monday morning, about thirty-eight hours after arrival; and whether arrangements can be made to accord to the Indian and Australian mail services the same promptitude of treatment which is given to mails from the United States.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The Indian and Australian mail viâ Brindisi, which had been somewhat delayed by bad weather in the English Channel, reached London at about 4.10 p.m., almost at the same time as a heavy mail received from the United States viâ Plymouth. Ordinary and express deliveries of letters were made on the evening of the 30th January, but it was not found possible to deal with the newspapers before the morning of Monday the 1st February. It appears that certain newspapers, apparently those to which the hon. Member refers, were treated in the ordinary manner, whereas they should have been sent out for express delivery, and of this irregularity proper notice has been taken. I do not find that any were delayed in delivery by the fault of the Post Office until 11 a.m., but if the hon. Member will furnish me with particulars of any papers so delayed, I will have further inquiry made and will communicate with him. The Indian mail is dealt with in London with the same attention to promptitude as is bestowed on the American mails.

Ireland—Reduction on Second-term Rents.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what the percentage of reduction on second-term rents has been in the several counties in Ireland for the months of October, November, and December last.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) A Return of judicial rents fixed by the Chief Commission, Sub-Commissions, and Valuers, during the three months ended 31st December, 1903, is appended.

Province and County.	Number of Cases.	First Statutory Term Rent.			Second Statutory Term Rent.			Percentage of Reduction.
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Ulster :—								
Antrim	56	1,350	13	8	1,055	11	0	21·8
Armagh	64	697	11	3	573	9	6	17·7
Cavan	130	1,947	8	0	1,572	16	4	19·2
Donegal	2	14	5	0	10	10	0	26·3
Down	232	4,300	9	2	3,346	6	0	22·1
Fermanagh	31	624	12	8	511	14	6	18·0
Londonderry ...	4	93	12	0	79	2	3	15·4
Monaghan	140	1,342	10	6	1,181	12	0	11·9
Tyrone	32	249	4	6	218	0	0	12·5
Total ...	691	10,620	6	9	8,549	1	7	19·5

Province and County.	Number of Cases.	First Statutory Term Rent.			Second Statutory Term Rent.			Percentage of Reduction.
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Leinster :—								
Carlow	—	—			—			—
Dublin	—	—			—			—
Kildare	—	—			—			—
Kilkenny	32	1,370	3	5	1,158	6	7	15·4
King's	—	—			—			—
Longford	49	1,500	7	6	1,261	0	0	15·9
Louth	—	—			—			—
Meath	27	908	7	5	817	6	10	10·0
Queen's	4	126	18	0	107	19	0	14·9
Westmeath	15	667	4	4	571	17	0	14·2
Wexford	29	562	10	4	519	7	6	7·6
Wicklow	21	895	14	0	789	4	0	11·8
Total ...	177	6,031	5	0	5,225	0	11	13·3

Province and County.	Number of Cases.	First Statutory Term Rent.			Second Statutory Term Rent.			Percentage of Reduction.
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Connaught :—								
Galway	28	1,053	7	0	916	17	0	12·9
Leitrim	—	—			—			—
Mayo	—	—			—			—
Roscommon	70	1,141	9	7	980	7	6	14·1
Sligo	32	302	18	4	266	6	0	12·0
Total ...	130	2,497	14	11	2,163	10	6	13·3

Province and County.	Number of Cases.	First Statutory Term Rent.	Second Statutory Term Rent.	Percentage of Reduction.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Munster :—				
Clare	31	1,343 3 6	1,116 13 0	16·8
Cork	142	6,427 17 9	5,506 6 6	14·3
Kerry	31	476 19 0	373 6 0	21·7
Limerick	63	2,733 14 6	2,290 15 0	16·2
Tipperary	25	1,331 19 0	1,123 0 6	15·6
Waterford	3	156 19 6	137 3 0	12·6
Total ...	295	12,470 13 3	10,547 4 0	15·4
Ireland ...	1,293	31,619 19 11	26,484 17 0	16·2

Irish National Education—Reduction of the Average.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in accordance with the promise made last session relative to the reduction of the average to fifty for an assistant, he will direct the Commissioners of National Education to put the new rule in force.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) No promise was given by me last session that the average required for assistant teachers would be reduced to fifty. What I stated was that a proposal to this effect, involving an additional charge of £24,000 per annum on the Estimates for public education, had been made; but that, in the opinion of the Irish Government, an addition of so large a character should be considered in relation to all other educational demands.

Salaries of Irish National School Teachers.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the amount voted for increase of salaries to national teachers, and the amount actually expended.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The amount provided for this purpose in the Estimates for Public Education, Ireland, for the current financial year was £35,000, which amount has been expended.

Gun Licences in Ireland—Case of Patrick Needham.

Dr. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the reason why Patrick Needham, of Saula, Achill Sound, County Mayo, was refused a gun licence.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The question of the issue of an arms licence is one for the consideration of the resident magistrate, who is the licensing officer of the district. It would be contrary to the invariable practice to state the reasons that actuate the licensing officer in declining, in the exercise of his discretion, to grant a licence in any individual case. But having been informed of these reasons in the present instance, I am satisfied he exercised his discretion in a reasonable manner.

Duke of York's School—Disposal of Site.

Mr. WHITMORE (Chelsea): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any decision has been arrived at as to the disposal of the site of the Duke of York's Military School at Chelsea.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The matter is still under the consideration of His Majesty's Government.

New Field Guns—Proportion to be made by Private Firms.

Mr. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is in a position to state what proportion of the new field guns will be manufactured at the Royal Arsenal and what proportion will be put out to tender by private firms.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) I am not yet in a position to give any information on this matter.

Lady Clerks in Crown Agents Offices.

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what are the hours of work for lady clerks in the office of the Crown Agents for the Colonies; if they are compelled to work overtime; and at what rate of pay or remuneration.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The internal administration of the office of the Crown Agents for the Colonies is entirely in their hands. They inform me, however, that the hours of work for lady clerks in their office are 10 A.M. to 5 P.M., but, like all other members of the staff, they are required to remain until any pressing work is completed before they are at liberty to leave. The Crown Agents do not give extra pay for overtime work, but the fact that overtime is often necessary is taken into account in the amount of the salaries which they give to their staff. I may add that the lady clerks in the Crown Agents' office receive salaries commencing at £70 and rising to £150 a year. They have four weeks holiday in the year, in addition to Bank and other special holidays, a half holiday on every Saturday, and a whole holiday on every third Saturday whenever the state of business permits. I understand that these conditions of employment compare favourably with those which are in force in Government offices, even when the fullest allowance is made for overtime payments in the latter, and I am informed that no complaints on the subject have reached the Crown Agents.

Immigrants into Canada.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the number of immigrants into Canada for settlement during the year ending 30th June, 1903, distinguishing between the various nationalities.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I have not yet received the statistics of immigration into Canada for the year ended 30th June last, but I have asked for them and will communicate them to the hon. Member when received.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Cubicles for Soldiers.

LIEUT.-COLONEL TUFNELL (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the barracks now in course of erection on Salisbury Plain will be on the cubicle system; and whether it is proposed to adopt this system in the future.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The barracks now in course of erection at Tidworth for eight infantry battalions are being so built that at any time if desired the cubicle system can be introduced. Experiments are now being made, but no decision can be arrived at until the present experiments with cubicle fittings are concluded.

LIEUT.-COLONEL TUFNELL: Will it apply to cavalry as well as infantry?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I can only say that until the result of the experiments is ascertained we cannot say whether the system will be adopted.

Destruction of Military Stores at Durban.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that stores of ham and bacon packed by well-known Britis and Irish firms sent out to South Africa as war stores, and to all appearances sound and good, were burnt at Durban by order of the military authorities; and, if so, will he state what was the estimated cost of these stores, and what was their aggregate amount; and what explanation, if any, is there of the waste of this public property, having regard to the severe distress and scarcity of food in many parts of South Africa.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The hon. and learned Member has been somewhat misinformed. The stores of ham and bacon destroyed at Durban suffered through the deficiency of proper storage consequent on war conditions, and were condemned as unfit for human consumption, having become so corrupt that they were a danger to the health of the inhabitants. The general officer commanding reported on the 12th October last that the total then condemned amounted to 48,413 lbs. bacon and 161,273 lbs. ham, and that a further 190,000 lbs. bacon known to be bad awaited formal condemnation. The estimated value of all these supplies is £19,000.

Cost of Somaliland Expedition.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what has been the cost of the Somaliland Expedition during the present financial year; what was the original estimate of its cost; and what is the total amount of money expended down to the present time.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Full information on these points will be given on the introduction of the Army Supplementary Estimates, and I must ask the hon. Member to be good enough to postpone his Question until that occasion.

Mr. BUCHANAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say how much money has been spent up to the present time.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I do not think I can.

Mr. BUCHANAN: May we assume there will be a Supplementary Estimate for this expedition?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, Sir.

South African War Correspondence.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to a statement of General Sir William Butler, K.C.B., in his evidence before the War Commission (vol. ii., p. 74), that he was unable to produce in its entirety the correspondence which passed between the War Office and himself during the period of his command, from November, 1898, till August, 1899, because he was recently informed at the War Office that much of the confidential correspondence at that time had been destroyed by order of the authorities at Cape Town; did the destruction of this confidential correspondence take place at the War Office or Cape Town; if it took place at the War Office was the destruction carried out with the sanction of the Secretary of State for War at the time, and what was the date of the destruction; if it took place at Cape Town who were the authorities by whose order these documents were destroyed, and had these authorities the sanction of the War Office for that destruction; and whether, having regard to the gravity of the destruction of public documents, he has any, and, if so, what explanation to offer.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: A considerable quantity of correspondence stored at Cape Town was destroyed by order of the military authorities there in consequence of a suspicion that the papers in question were contaminated by plague infection. The papers in question are believed to have been among those thus destroyed. Copies of all official correspondence that passed between the War Office and General Sir William Butler during his tenure of command at the Cape have been preserved.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Were these confidential documents destroyed by the Government in order to save their own bacon?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Thibet.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N. E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will give the Return relating to British and Indian Commerce with Thibet, asked for in the Order Paper this day.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): I have no objection to giving a Return showing the imports and exports between India and Thibet from 1890–1 to 1902–3 with such details as are possible.

The Return referred to is as follows:—

Thibet (Trade Statistics),—Address for Return of Statistics relating to trade with Thibet since the date of the signing of the Convention of 1890, giving particulars regarding the quantity, classification, and value of the annual exports from British India to Thibet of (*a*) non-Indian merchandise; (*b*) of Indian merchandise; and (*c*) of exports from Thibet to British India.

Government Purchase of South African Railway.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the purchase by the Government of the railways in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony has been completed; and what is the total amount paid for that purpose under the South African Loan Act of last year.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): The purchase has not yet been completed. The amount paid so far is about £11,000,000.

Chinese Labour in the Transvaal.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is proposed that the Chinese labourers imported into the Transvaal should be accompanied by their wives. May I also ask why the provisions with regard to the wives and families which appeared in the first draft have been omitted from the last?

*MR. LYTTELTON: The Ordinance provides that the families of labourers shall be subject to the same conditions as govern the introduction of the labourers themselves and also for their prompt repatriation in case of the labourer's death. Power is also given to the Lieutenant-Governor to make regulations for the introduction, repatriation, and control of the families of labourers, and these regulations will be subject to the sanction of the Secretary of State. My intention is to take precautions that all reasonable facilities shall be given for the reception and accommodation of the families of labourers. It is only a surmise, but I imagine the provisions introduced in the first draft of the Ordinance, and which I think affected Clauses 13 and 14, have been omitted because provisions which had been placed in the regulations rendered them surplusage.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): Are we to understand that all Chinese labourers that go from China to the Transvaal are to have the option of bringing their families with them if they wish?

[No answer was returned.]

Malta.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that four general elections have taken place in Malta since June, 1903; and whether, in view of the state of affairs in the island, he will consider the advisability of proposing a change in the constitution to give more effective popular representation.

*MR. LYTTELTON: Owing to the action of the elected members in resigning as soon as elected and then offering themselves for re-election, four so-called general elections have taken place in Malta since June 1903. The reasons for introducing the present constitution have been fully set forth in the Papers which have already been laid before Parliament, and nothing which has since occurred has led me to think that any change of the kind suggested is advisable.

MR. BOLAND: How many more elections will be required in order to satisfy the Government as to the attitude of the people of Malta?

[No answer was returned.]

The West Indian Relief Grants.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the whole of the £250,000 voted on 31st July, 1902, to assist the sugar producers of the West Indies has been distributed; on what principle the money was allotted; and whether he will furnish a Return setting out the names of the persons or firms who may have received any portion and the amounts allotted to them respectively.

*MR. LYTTELTON: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question. The whole fund except a few hundreds has been distributed among the beneficiary colonies. The money was applied to cash payments, to loans, to remission of taxation, to improvement of machinery according to the particular conditions of each colony; and peasants' interests have been safeguarded as well as planters.' Such a Return as is asked for would not be possible and would be misleading if it were possible, but if the hon. Member desires information in regard to any particular colony it will be given as far as possible.

Germany and Canada.

Mr. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Germany has offered to restore Canada to most-favoured-nation treatment upon terms which do not include recall on the part of Canada of her preference to the Mother Country; if he will state what is the position of the negotiations between Germany and Canada; through what medium they are being conducted; and when will Papers be laid.

*The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): As to the first Question I would refer the hon. Member to the Parliamentary Paper, "Commercial, No. 5, 1903," giving correspondence between the British and German Governments and particularly to the last two Papers. The position has not altered since then. The Secretary of State for the Colonies is in communication with the Government of Canada in regard to the matter. There are no further Papers which can be published at present.

The Purchase of Chilian Battleships.

Mr. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is proposed to provide for payment of the two warships purchased by Government out of the revenue of the financial year now current; and whether Supplementary Estimates will be laid.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): The payments for the Chilian ships falling due within the current financial year will be inserted in the Supplementary Estimates of this year, viz., £707,904, and the remainder, which is due to be paid in August, will be provided for in next year's Estimates, viz., £1,167,096, making a total of £1,875,000.

Tobacco Growing in Ireland.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state what arrangements have been made by the Treasury for the encouragement of tobacco growing in Ireland.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: It has been decided to allow the experimental cultivation of tobacco in Ireland upon a considerable scale for a period of five years under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland and by persons approved by that Department. A rebate of one-third of the existing duty will be granted on any tobacco produced as the result of the experiment. The Department of Agriculture is in communication with the Board of Inland Revenue regarding the regulations under which the tobacco is to be grown.

Status and Duties of Government Departments.

*Mr. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state what progress has been made by the Committee appointed to consider the position and duties of the Board of Trade and Local Government Board, and to report on the desirability of alterations in the constitution and status of these offices and of a rearrangement of duties between these Departments and other Government Departments; and when such Report is likely to be in the hands of Members.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I note that the hon. Member for Hoxton has a Question on the Paper for to-morrow on the same subject and will ask him to be good enough to consider this as an answer to him as well. The Committee, which originally consisted of Lord Jersey, (Chairman), Sir James Mackay, Sir Charles Ryan, Sir J. Gorst, and Mr. Alfred Emmott, M.P., was appointed on the 18th July last. They met at once, and adjourned pending the receipt of memoranda from the Board of Trade and

Local Government Board setting forth the history and duties of those Departments and their views on the subject of the Committee's reference. The Committee resumed their sittings last week, Sir G. Ryder having been added in place of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University who had resigned. I am unable to name a date for the completion of their inquiry, but I am aware that the chairman is anxious to proceed with it as rapidly as possible.

*MR. D. A. THOMAS: Do I understand that no meeting of the Committee was held for six months?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir. The Committee met immediately on its appointment and then adjourned in order to obtain certain information from the two Departments concerned. That information has only been supplied by one of the Departments within the last three or four weeks and the Committee met again as soon as it got it.

*MR. D. A. THOMAS: In which Department was it that the delay in replying occurred?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Local Government Board. I have no personal knowledge or information as to the reasonableness of the time taken.

Welsh Smokeless Coal.

SIR LEES KNOWLES (Salford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what is the total area in South Wales of the smokeless semi-bituminous coalfield; what is the estimated quantity in that area of unworked smokeless coal, such as is suitable for naval as distinguished from ordinary steam purposes; and what was the total amount of such coal exported to foreign countries from Newport, Swansea, and Cardiff in 1903.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I am afraid the information in my possession does not enable me to answer the Question adequately. As regards the first two paragraphs, I can only say that the whole matter of coal supplies in South Wales will come under the consideration of the Royal Commission which is now sitting. As regards the last paragraph, I am informed by the Board of Customs that the total amount of steam coal exported from Newport, Swansea, and Cardiff in 1903 was 18,427,574 tons, but they are unable to distinguish in this amount between the different classes of coal indicated by the hon. Baronet.

SIR LEES KNOWLES: Is it the fact that the agents of the Admiralty at the present time are unable to obtain at Cardiff what are known as "spot" cargoes?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: No, Sir.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): Will the Government take steps to acquire these stocks of coal for this country?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I must ask for notice of that.

SIR LEES KNOWLES: May I ask whether, in view of the urgency of the question, the right hon. Gentleman will ask the Commission to make an interim Report?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I do not think I can do that.

SIR LEES KNOWLES: I beg to give notice that on an early date I will move that it is desirable that the Government should make early provision to ensure an adequate supply of smokeless steam coal for naval purposes in future years.

Servants' Registry Offices.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he intends to introduce any legislation with a view to regulating rates charged to applicants for employment through servants' registry offices.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: No, Sir. I have no information before me on which I feel called upon to contemplate such legislation.

Board of Trade and Railway Management.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will state the steps which have been taken by his Department since March, 1903, to carry out the Railway Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900, particularly as to the making of rules under Section 1, the inspection of railways under Section 13, and the making of inquiries and experiments under Section 15.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): As the hon. Member is aware, the Board of Trade put forward an amended rule under Section 1 of the Act respecting the provision of either-side brake levers on goods wagons, such rule being drawn on lines indicated by the Court of the Railway and Canal Commission when this subject was previously before the court. Certain objections were made to this amended rule by railway companies and were referred to the court. These objections were heard by the court in July last, but the hearing was adjourned in order that experiments might be conducted on certain forms of brake with regard to which evidence had been given. The Board are also proposing a rule to meet an application by the Taff Vale Railway Company for an exemption of certain trains from the operation of No. 8 of the rules made in 1902. The application was not in the first instance entertained by the Board of Trade, but the Commissioners to whom the matter was referred in pursuance of the Act decided that in the particular circumstances some exemption was reasonable. Since I replied to a Question by the hon. Member on the 25th March last year†, sixty-eight additional inspections have been ordered of stations and sidings in connection with either the lighting thereof or the operations of propping and tow-roping. The reports of the inspecting officers on thirty-five of these cases have been received, and I am glad to be able to say that so far the railway companies seem generally willing to carry out any improvements the Board's officers have thought necessary. Arrangements are being made for the experiments to which I have already referred on particular forms of either-side brakes and I hope they will shortly be carried out.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: Are any experiments contemplated in regard to automatic couplings?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: None have been undertaken, and none are in immediate contemplation.

The Fiscal Inquiry.

MR. BLACK: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the inquiry undertaken by the Government as to our fiscal policy is now concluded; and whether all the documents and statistics laid before the Government have been published.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: As I stated in reply to my right hon. friend the Member for East Somerset on Thursday last,† inquiries are continually in progress by the Commercial, Labour, and Statistical Departments of the Board of Trade with a view to supplement and complete the information contained in the Blue-book (Cd. 1761). Some of the information procured is of a confidential character and could not be published, but the question of publishing other parts of the material—which is being got together—will be considered at a later stage.

MR. BLACK: May I ask when the Prime Minister's pamphlet, advocating the taxation of food, will be circulated.

[No answer was returned.]

*MR. REA (Gloucester): Will the right hon. Gentleman cause to be reproduced and published the charts prepared by his Department for the St. Louis Exhibition.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I cannot give a definite answer at the present moment, but, if it is found to be possible, it will be done.

Coal Export Duty.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what steps are taken by the Customs authorities to check the accuracy of the declared values of coal furnished by exporters at Cardiff and other South Wales ports; if he has any official information tending to throw doubts on the substantial correctness of the values of coal given in the monthly Trade Returns; and whether it has recently been found necessary in any case to enforce the penalties provided for in Clauses 110 and 168 of the Customs Consolidation Act, 1876.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxx., 176.

† See page 347.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Board of Customs inform me that as regards all coal on which rebate of duty is claimed, on the ground that the value did not exceed six shillings the ton, they require statutory declarations and invoices, in proof of value, and if necessary the exporter is called upon for an explanation, and required to amend the entry. As regards other coal, inquiries are made and invoices called for if there appears to be any reason to doubt the accuracy of the declared values. The answer to the second part of Question is in the negative. The Board of Customs have not, so far, had occasion to enforce the full penalty provided for by Section 168 of the Customs Consolidation Act, 1876, in connection with erroneous declarations as to the value of coal exported, but fines have in some cases been inflicted on offenders. Section 110 of the Customs Consolidation Act, 1876, has been repealed, and Section 11 of the Act, 44 Vict., Cap. 12, which replaced it, is not applicable to coal.

Brussels Sugar Convention.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, having regard to the undertaking of the Government given on the 5th August, 1903, that if the Commission set up under the Brussels Sugar Convention should decide that sugared goods were not to be treated on the same basis as sugar by the contracting parties, steps would immediately be taken by the Government on behalf of the manufacturers in this country; and, seeing that this eventuality has now arisen, whether he will state what steps the Government propose to take.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The undertaking given on the date referred to is not correctly described in the Question. The statements made by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer and by myself were to the effect that if and when the necessity should arise the Government would take precautions to prevent our manufacturers from being injured by the unfair competition of imported sugared products enjoying a bounty, or made with bountied sugar. To that pledge we adhere, but up to the present we are not aware that any appreciable quantity of sugared goods enjoying advantages of this nature are being imported into this country to the detriment of our manufacturers.

MR. LOUGH: But has not the Sugar Commission given an exactly opposite decision to that stated by the right hon. Gentleman? Has he received any complaints from sugar manufacturers?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I think the discrepancy to which the hon. Member refers is in relation to the surtax. It was certainly understood that there should not be a larger surtax on sugared goods than on sugar, but the Commission has decided in an opposite sense.

Amendment of the Companies Act.

MAJOR EVANS-GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the evasions of the Companies Act of 1900, disclosed in the last Report of the Inspector-General, in companies liquidation; and whether he proposes to take any steps to prevent the further issue in this country of companies without prospectus, by which expedient the revenue and the public are defrauded.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: A Bill amending the Companies Act, 1900, in this and some other respects is in course of preparation.

London Tube Railways.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets St George's): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Tube Railways have been subjected to inspection by the Board of Trade within the last few months; and is he in a position to state that all reasonable precautions have been taken calculated to reduce to a minimum all risk of disasters similar to those which occurred in the Paris tubes.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The precautions which are or might be taken against the risk of fire were discussed last autumn between the officers of the Board of Trade and those of the several Tube Railways open for traffic or in course of construction. The Board's Chief Inspecting Officer of Railways and their Electrical Adviser subsequently drew up a list of recommendations on which the observations of the companies were invited. The replies are not yet complete, but although there may be differences of opinion on some matters of detail, I have every reason to believe that the views of the Department, so far as not already met, will in the main be given effect to. When finally settled, these recommendations will be imposed as requirements so far as the powers of the Board extend.

London Telephone System.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will state what progress has been made with the London telephone system, and how much of the money provided for the service has been expended.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Nine post office telephone exchanges have been opened in the London area, and three others are in course of construction. On the 4th inst., 15,020 telephones were working in connection with these exchanges. The expenditure for the working lines, and for a large amount of general construction available for the further development of the system and the establishment of additional exchanges, amounted, on the 30th November, to £1,441,775. Parliament, when providing money for telephone capital expenditure, did not allot a defined portion of that money to expenditure in London; but I may mention that the sums provided for such expenditure in general will be exhausted by the end of the present financial year, and that I propose at the earliest opportunity to ask leave to introduce a Bill to provide further moneys for the extension of the telephone system.

American Mail Routes.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that the American mails delivered *viâ* Portsmouth take a longer time for delivery, especially in the commercial centres in the North of England and Scotland, than the mails carried *viâ* Queenstown and Dublin, he will arrange in future to continue the route most suitable to public convenience.

LORD STANLEY: The United States Post Office makes its own arrangements for the conveyance of the mails which it sends to this country, and I have, I am afraid, no control over its action.

M.P.'s and the Telephone.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state on what grounds a charge of twopence is made to Members of this House for the use of a telephone which the Post Office has erected in one of the rooms of this House, while no charge is made to Members for the use of the Telephone Company's instruments; and whether he can see his way to remove this charge.

LORD STANLEY: Twopence is the ordinary charge for the use of the telephone at a public call office in London, but circumstances in the case of telephones supplied in the precincts of this House are special, and I have decided that in future no charge shall be made to Members for their use.

The Christ's Hospital Site.

SIR JOSEPH DIMSDALE (London): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, whether in the contemplated acquisition by the Government of the site of Christ's Hospital, the purchase will be subject to the arrangement agreed to between the Corporation of London and the Governors of Christ's Hospital for making a street fifty feet wide between Giltspur Street and King Edward Street and for the widening of the latter thoroughfare.

LORD STANLEY: The acquisition of the site of Christ's Hospital will not be subject to any arrangement for the formation of a new street, since any such scheme would render the property entirely unsuitable for the purpose for which it is required by the Post Office; but a strip of land is left at the disposal of the Governors of Christ's Hospital with a view to the widening of King Edward Street.

SIR JOSEPH DIMSDALE asked if the noble Lord was aware that months before the Government entered into communication with the Governors of Christ's Hospital a site had been proposed to the Corporation of London for a new street and the widening of another street.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, Order! The hon. Gentleman is now arguing the Question.

Tay Fisheries.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether a report has been made to the Fishery Board for Scotland on the dispute between the drift and bag-net fishers on the Tay; and whether publicity will be given to it for the information of the disputants.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): No report has yet been received by the Fishery Board for Scotland regarding the dispute between the drift and bag-net fishers in the Tay.

Geological Surveys of Ireland.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether, in view of the fact that the rock survey of England is completed and the soil or drift survey is now being carried on to completion on six-inch maps kept in the Geological Survey Office, he will state whether in Ireland the rock survey is finished and whether the drift or soil survey is being carried on; and whether he will consider the advisability of transferring the work of the Geological Survey of Ireland to the Department of Agriculture in Ireland, and of publishing maps in the annual reports showing the progress made.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): The survey of the solid geology of England has not been completed, but together with the drift survey is being carried on on the basis of six inches to the mile on maps published since the primary geological survey was undertaken. The survey of the solid geology of Ireland was completed in 1887, and has been revised as materials became available. The drift survey, which must not be confused with a soil survey, continues to be carried on. The Board are considering the future relations of the work of the Geological Survey in Ireland to the allied economic inquiries conducted by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, and hope shortly to be in a position to communicate with that Department on the subject. Maps showing the progress made are published with the Report of 1902; details of the progress are there given in the text. Fuller details are being prepared for the maps in the forthcoming Report.

Railway Rates In Ireland.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that dissatisfaction prevails amongst farmers and others in South Kerry who undertook experiments in the growing of early potatoes last year because of the failure of the Congested Districts Board to secure from the railway company a reduction of freight; and whether steps will be taken to secure a reduction in the coming season, and to advertise it for the benefit of those who are engaged in this industry.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The agricultural work of the Congested Districts Board has lately been transferred to the Department of Agriculture. The Department has taken steps to secure reduced rates for the carriage of early potatoes grown in connection with its experiments, and steps will be taken to give publicity to the reduced rates that may be secured.

Subsidised Coach and Steamer Services, Ireland.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Government intend to withdraw the subsidy granted in connection with the tourist routes via Kilrush and Tarbert and via Kilrush and Foynes; and, if so, whether this intention may be reconsidered in the interest of the districts named.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): At the same time may I ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government will continue the subsidy granted to coach and steamer services in the West of Ireland so that tourists will be able to avail themselves of those routes.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The two coach services between Listowel and Tarbert, and Ennistymon and Ballyvaughan, and the steamer service between Tarbert and Kilrush were experimentally established and subsidised under the Railways Act, 1896. These services have now been worked for nearly seven years, and I regret to say that the result of the experiment, financially, has been unsatisfactory. A considerable loss has been experienced on each service, and from the three services the total receipts have been less than twenty per cent. of the expenditure. Under the circumstances, and having regard to the small unexpended balance of money available under the Act of 1896, notice has been given to terminate the existing contracts on the 31st May next.

Lettir (Kerry) National School.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the National Board of Education has finally decided on the plans for new schools; and whether the necessary steps will be taken to facilitate the immediate erection of a school at Lettir, Glenbeigh, County Kerry.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The applicant for a grant to build the school at Lettir has elected to wait until the new plans have been sanctioned. In respect to the general question, the Irish Government is in communication with the Treasury, and I hope shortly to be in a position to make an announcement on the subject.

Land Purchase Act—Public Trustee.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland the name of the public trustee appointed under the Land Purchase Act of last session, and the salary attached to the office; what his previous employment was; and whether he has any official address in Ireland.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Mr. Arthur McClintock, whose appointment was published in the Press on the 9th October last. His salary is at the rate of £1,200 a year. For twelve years he occupied the position of land agent, and previously to that he was employed under the Arrears of Rent Act, 1882. His official address in Dublin is 25, Upper Merrion Street.

Glannagh Land Dispute.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of John Kenny, tenant to a middle landlord, living at Glannagh, county Longford, who is willing to sell his holding to him, but cannot do so in consequence of the attitude of the head landlord; and, if so, will he direct the Estate Commissioners in this case to purchase the holding with a view to resale to the tenant.

Mr. WYNDHAM: A letter has been sent to the hon. Member saying there is a difficulty in identifying the case to which he refers, owing to the fact that the name of the middle landlord is not given. I have also told him that if he will communicate the name to me, I will be happy to make further inquiry.

Longford Crimes Act Prosecution.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the £5 odd claimed by the Inspector-General of Police for an extra police force in County Longford, in connection with a Crimes Act prosecution there in the month of October, 1902, has been abandoned; and, if not, will he now direct that it be struck out.

MR. WYNDHAM: The county council objected to make this payment under a misapprehension of the requirements of the law, which were explained to the council on the 4th inst. The claim will not be abandoned.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Then is it intended to exact the £5 from the county council?

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir.

Longford Police Barracks Lock-up.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the insanitary condition of the lock-up for untried prisoners under temporary arrest in the Royal Irish Constabulary Barracks, Longford; and, whether, seeing that in consequence of cold and dampness several deaths have occurred in consequence of detention in this lock-up, he will cause inquiry to be made with a view to putting these cells into sanitary order and comfort, so that prisoners can be detained without danger to their health or life.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am informed that no deaths have occurred attributable to the condition of this lock-up. The building is detached from the police barrack and in this respect is inconveniently placed. I am making inquiry into its general condition and will communicate the result of my inquiries to the hon. Member.

Irish Land Purchase—Future Tenants.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that there are on estates in Ireland numbers of tenants who under pressure of eviction and from other causes have been forced into the position of future tenants on the landlords' terms; and, if so, whether the cases of such will be considered in any amending Bill to the Irish Land Act of 1903 which may be introduced.

MR. WYNDHAM: There is nothing in the Act of last year to debar future tenants from purchasing. They can purchase under Clause 1 (2).

Owenmore River Floods.

MR. O'DOWD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, owing to the periodical flooding of the Owenmore River, in the county of Sligo, quantities of hay and other feeding stuffs are annually destroyed; whether he has received any report as to the effect of last year's flood, by which poor people have been ruined; and whether, in response to resolutions of the county council and other public bodies in Sligo, steps will be taken by the Irish Government or the Department of Agriculture to have this river drained.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Department of Agriculture will cause an inspection of this district to be carried out at an early date, with a view to determine what action it is practicable to take.

Labourers' Cottages in Ireland.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will grant the Return standing on today's Notice Paper relating to Labourers' Cottages in Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, the Return will be granted.

The Return referred to is as follows:—

Return showing the number of cottages applied for in every Poor Law Union in Ireland under the latest completed scheme in connection with the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, together with the number of applications for extra half acres to Cottages already built under the Acts under said scheme; how many of these applications for Cottages and extra half acres were sanctioned; the amount of expenses connected with such scheme; and in what way applied.

Cusack Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that application is being made to Mr. Justice

Ross to admit as tenants on the Cusack Estate for the purpose of sale a number of large farmers and planters to the exclusion of the evicted tenants or their representatives residing in the neighbourhood of this estate; and whether he is prepared to offer any suggestion to the Estate Commissioners to purchase this estate, with a view to re-sale to the former tenants or their descendants.

MR. WYNDHAM: The application referred to comes on before Judge Ross to-day. The procedure in respect of estates for the sale of which an absolute order has been made is, so far as the Estate Commissioners are concerned, laid down in Section 7.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to take any action such as he took last year?

MR. WYNDHAM: I must refer the hon. Member to the section of the Act which shows that the Estates Commissioners can only take action on information being laid.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: But cannot the right hon. Gentleman intervene. It would be much more effective.

MR. WYNDHAM: I cannot undertake to do the work of the Judges or of the Estate Commissioners.

Bee-keeping in Ireland.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether any steps will be taken in the present session to frame a legislative measure with a view to stamping out the disease of foul brood amongst bees in Ireland.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): A scheme has recently been issued by the Department of Agriculture enabling local authorities to arrange for the treatment of bees infected with this disease. The scheme also provides for their destruction, with the consent of the owner, and for the payment of compensation to the latter. The question as to the necessity for legislative action can best be decided when the scheme has been in operation for a sufficient time.

Irish Magistracy.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether persons recommended for the commission of the peace by the Lord Lieutenant of the county are entitled thereby to be appointed to the magistracy, or whether, in case of conviction involving fine or imprisonment for any offence the Lord Chancellor is entitled to refuse the appointment though so recommended.

MR. ATKINSON: The answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative. It is always competent to the Lord Chancellor to refuse to appoint a person to the commission of the peace under any circumstances. I cannot reply to the second part of the Question specifically, without being informed of the nature of the offence referred to.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: If I bring concrete cases before the right hon. Gentleman will he take action.

MR. ATKINSON: I shall be happy to answer any Question I can.

Belfast Post Office—Counter Losses.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received official reports showing that the sums lost at the money order counter, Belfast, were actually passed over the counter to the public, and what steps have been taken to show that this was the case; and whether, in view of the fact that for the two years from 1st January, 1902, to 31st December, 1903, the sum of £70 18s. 9d. was lost at the money order counter, Belfast, he will state what steps he proposes taking to safeguard the interests of counter clerks in future.

LORD STANLEY: I have not received any reports of the kind indicated by the hon. Member and I am informed that no such reports have been made. The actual amount of the deficiencies noted in the cash at the money order counter during the two years ended the 31st of December last was £63 12s. 9d. and this was among twenty-seven officers who performed duty at the money order counter during that period. In some cases it was afterwards found that the apparent deficiency was due to errors made by the officers in their accounts, and in consequence a considerable proportion of the above-mentioned sum was returned to the officers concerned. The conditions under which the officers work at the public counter at Belfast are considered satisfactory and the Postmaster of Belfast informs me that no complaints on the subject have been made by the staff.

Kilrush and the Canadian Mail Service.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government, in connection with the new Canadian mail service, will carefully consider the claims of Kilrush, county Clare, as a port of call.

LORD STANLEY: The question is one which concerns the Post Office. The hon. Member may rest assured that in any negotiation respecting the Canadian mail service, any advantages which Kilrush may possess as a port of call will not be lost sight of.

Port of London Bill.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is intended to proceed with the Port of London Bill.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I understand that my right hon. friend hopes to proceed with the Bill as soon as public business permits.

SIR F. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge): Is it intended to proceed with it before Easter?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: That depends on the state of public business.

SIR F. DIXON HARTLAND: Will full notice be given?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: Yes, Sir.

Town Holdings Committee.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the advisability of reappointing a Town Holdings Committee to consider and report upon the existing terminable leasehold system and the taxation of land values.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I can only repeat the reply which the Prime Minister gave in July † last to this Question—viz., that, while he does not underrate the importance of the question, he is not prepared to recommend the appointment of a Committee. I am aware of nothing that has since occurred to alter that view.

RUSSIA AND JAPAN.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary whether the Government can communicate any information to the House as to the relations between Russia and Japan?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: We have been officially informed that diplomatic relations between the Governments of Russia and Japan have been broken off. As to the details I can add nothing to the information which appears in this connection in the public Press this morning.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Home Secretary if His Majesty's Government have issued instructions to the authorities of British ports and coaling stations abroad prescribing to them their conduct in the event of war towards belligerent ships of war. Will such ships of war only be permitted in such ports to be supplied with so much coal as will suffice to take them to the nearest port of their own country and no more; will they be prohibited from receiving any further supply of coal in any other British port until the expiration of three months from the date of the first supply, will their stay in such ports be restricted to twenty-four hours, except in the case of stress of weather or distress for necessary repairs; and will such vessels be prohibited from bringing prizes into British ports. Will the same rules be enforced in the ports of the British self-governing colonies.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv, 1320.

*Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS: The Government have not overlooked the questions of belligerency implied in my hon. friend's Question, but his Question itself is of a very highly technical character, and it would be more satisfactory if he would put it on the Paper.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I will put it down for to-morrow.

STANDING ORDERS.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Standing Orders do consist of thirteen Members. Sir John Brunner, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. John Edward Ellis, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Halsey, Mr. Humphreys-Owen, Mr. James Lowther, Sir James Rankin, Mr. William Redmond, Colonel Stopford-Sackville, Sir Mark M'Taggart Stewart, Mr. Whitmore, and Mr. Wodehouse were accordingly nominated members of the Committee.—(*Mr. Halsey.*)

SELECTION.

Mr. Blake, Mr. Sydney Buxton, Sir John Dorington, Sir William Hart Dyke, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. McKenna, Sir Mark McTaggart Stewart, Mr. Wharton, and Mr. Wodehouse were nominated members of the Committee of Selection with the Chairman of the Select Committee on Standing Orders.—(*Mr. Halsey.*)

NEW BILL.

COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Coal Mines," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Thomas Bayley, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Hatch, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Theodore Taylor, Mr. McKenna, and Mr. Herbert Lewis; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 42.]

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

[Fifth Day.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

Most Gracious Sovereign,—

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Main Question again proposed,—

*Mr. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): I rise to move the Amendment standing in my name—"And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is essential for the safeguarding and promotion of the commercial and political interests of the British Empire that adequate steps should be taken to maintain and extend our commercial treaty rights, and that the Consular Service should be reorganised and strengthened on lines calculated to make it more effective for the promotion of the trade of the British Empire." As a Member of the House who has always been actively engaged in endeavouring to promote the prosperity of British trade, I welcome the attention that is now being given on the part of this country to the condition of our trade and commerce, and I desire to bring under the consideration of the House some practical methods which might be employed by the Government in developing that trade, altogether apart from the imposition of protective or preferential tariffs, which would, in my opinion, being an interference with the freedom of our trade and commerce, tend to lessen rather than to increase its prosperity. I will briefly refer to the urgent need which exists for the reorganisation and strengthening of the British Consular Service, so as to make it more effective for the promotion of British trade. As at present constituted, the British Consular Service is deficient and inefficient for this purpose. The Committee which sat last year under the chairmanship of Sir William Walrond to inquire into the constitution of the Consular Service, reported most emphatically in favour of radical and important changes, and it was with the deepest regret that I saw no reference was made in the King's Speech to any intention on the part of the Government to introduce legislation carrying out those recommendations.

The Committee reported that the Consular Service at the present moment is not attractive to capable young men in that it offers no definite prospects of promotion, because men, new to the service, may be appointed over the heads of those who have been years in it. The Report goes on to say that the Committee, while they recognise that power must be reserved to the Secretary of State to appoint any person, regardless of the age limit, to one of the higher positions by reason of his special qualifications, recommend, nevertheless, that such appointments should be rare, so as to avoid lessening the attractions of the service by blocking the promotion of deserving officers. Then, in regard to commercial training, they strongly recommend that an effort should be made to draw into the Consular Service young men who have been trained in commercial houses for four or five years, and that there should be introduced — in order to increase the efficiency of the service—some system of inspection of the Consulates and Vice-Consulates. That reminds me that within my own knowledge several most distinguished members of the Consular Service have been attracted from it by the offer of more lucrative appointments elsewhere, and I venture to say that if there had been some system of appointing Inspectors-General of Consulates, the services of these distinguished and experienced men might have been retained. How, for instance, can the British Minister at Pekin properly supervise and visit all the Consulates and Vice-Consulates throughout the great Chinese Empire? It is absolutely necessary, then, for the efficiency of the service to have Inspectors-General appointed. Another important recommendation is that in large cities the system of having unpaid Consuls should be continued. On that point I am at variance with the Committee, because I venture to hold that the appointment of unpaid British Consuls and especially of foreigners to represent British trade is adverse to the interests of our trade. Probably they are members of business houses working in competition with other firms, and obviously it cannot be expected, while human nature remains what it is, that they should afford equal facilities to the whole British commercial community in conflict with their own personal interests. There has, it is noteworthy, been practically no increase in the expenditure on our Consular Service in the last thirty years. Thirty years ago it cost £200,000 annually. Now the cost is only £230,000, and, seeing that our trade has practically doubled and our shipping trebled in that time, it is clear the service must be deficient so far as regards the employment of a sufficient army of able agents to promote our trade and commercial interests all over the world.

One suggestion I have to make is that our Consuls should have more leave given them to enable them to put themselves in direct communication with the commercial communities in this country doing business where they are located, another is that there should be a better system of control and supervision as between the Foreign Office and the Board of Trade. The delay which formerly prevailed in the publication of Consular Reports has largely been got rid of, but the fact remains that there is no proper provision for a careful examination of the Reports before they are printed, and there is no one at the Foreign Office whose duty it is to read them and to bring their merits or demerits under the notice of the Department or of the Secretary of State. I could quote the opinions of Mr. Bryce, Sir Charles Dilke, Sir Edward Grey, and Lord Derby in regard to the disorganisation of the service and the necessity for ensuring promotion by merit, if the services of the best men are to be secured, and if the service is to be made as efficient as it should be in the interests of British trade.

I have this to say, that in my somewhat extended travels I have had many opportunities of meeting the Consuls of the United States of America, Germany, and Japan in various parts of the world, and I am bound to confess that, though we have many good men in our Consular Service doing excellent work, I believe that the Consular Services of those countries are more highly equipped, better organised, and better paid than ours; and that hey are at the present moment giving more attention to the promotion of the commerce of their countries than to the discharge of judicial and diplomatic functions. They are, in fact, superior to our Consular Service in promoting the trade and commerce of their respective nations. It has been admitted by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that our Consular Service is defective in connection with Persia. Last year the noble Lord said—

> "I am bound to say that my impression is that the Consular Service has for some years past been undermanned in point of numbers, and also insufficiently equipped in point of that special knowledge which members of the Consular Service in remote countries like Persia should possess."

And he added—

> "I hope that before long I shall be able to announce that we have chosen means for giving our Consular representatives in Persia that special knowledge which, under the present system, they have, perhaps, not sufficient opportunities of acquiring."

I shall be glad if the noble Lord can state to us what arrangements have been made to secure that object. We were told only last year in regard to the French Congo, where important British commercial interests were threatened, that this country had only one single Consul in that country, which is larger than France; and I want to know whether that has been remedied. Turning to the Colonies, we find that whilst foreign nations have got Consuls in all the British Colonies promoting the trade interests of their respective countries, we alone have no Consular representatives in the shape of trade agents in any single British Colony to further the commercial interests of the mother country. I learned only the other day from a Canadian friend that, through the active efforts of Belgian Consuls, two or three large bridge contracts had recently been given to Belgium, whereas we had no one on the ground to make similar efforts in behalf of British bridge builders. Again, I would give the House an example that I saw myself last year in Canada. I went to the town of Chicoutimi, where I found huge pulp mills recently erected which had been supplied with pulping machinery, turbines, electrical plant, and huge penstocks constructed of iron and steel for securing water pressure for driving the works. I found, also, that the whole produce of that great pulp mill had been sold for five years ahead in London. Knowing that we had a rebate of one-third from the Canadian import duty, and that our ships were going out light to bring back cargoes of pulp, I naturally expected we should have had a share in that trade; I said to my Canadian friend—

> "I hope the mother country got a share of the orders for the new plant."

But he replied that—

> "British manufacturers did not supply an ounce; they, in Canada, did not even know that we made such things in England. The fact is, he said, we had at least twenty commercial travellers from the United States of America seeking this business, and not one from England."

I quote this as a striking example of the fact that our trade is placed at a disadvantage in having no trade agents at work in our interest the same as other countries have agents working in their interest, and also by the inactivity of our commercial travellers. I recognise that the Agent-General of Canada does what he can to bring about trade relations between Canadian and British business houses, but that is no excuse whatever for the continuance of the present system. We have a Government in power which professes to be concerned about our trade and commerce. Let them take steps to improve by reorganisation on proper lines, and by proper equipment, our Consular Service. I would like to ask the noble Lord whether His Majesty's Government have appointed three Consuls to go to the newly opened treaty ports in Manchuria? We learn that the United States of America have already appointed Consuls there, who are to be at their posts within six weeks. Is the British Government going to be behindhand, are we to have no British agents to look after British commerce as soon as these ports are open? I much regret that there is no reference whatever in the King's Speech as to whether or not the Government intend to give effect to the recommendations in the Report of the Committee on the Consular Service. I raise this as no Party matter. I should be abundantly gratified if the noble Lord is able to give us the fullest assurance that they will be given effect to at the earliest possible date. But at this juncture, when the whole attention of the nation is being devoted to our trade and commerce, I think a reference to it might well have been introduced into the King's Speech.

I turn to the second subject I ask the House to consider—viz., whether our commercial interests have not suffered through the neglect of the Government to vigorously promote and extend British treaty rights. Take an example, in the first place, from our Colonies. We were rejoiced to know that our great Dominion of Canada had made a reduction of one-third on their duties in favour of British goods; but is the country aware—is the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield aware, that while Canada gives with one hand, she takes away with the other in the case of the iron and steel trade of this country, a trade with which the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield is identified?

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): Not a bit of it.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: Evidently the hon. and gallant Member is not aware of the great extension of the bounty system in Canada which has taken place since last autumn, even since 8th May, a notable political date. What are the facts in regard to that bounty system, not only on the iron and steel manufactures of Canada, but upon the iron and steel manufactures from this country, which pay a high import duty in addition to the costs of freight and insurance from our ports to the ports over there? The Canadian Parliament has in the last session passed two new Bounty Bills under which they have taken power to give a bounty not exceeding seven dollars per ton on steel rails produced in Canada, and from three to four dollars per ton on structural iron and steel—joists, girders, channels, bars, and plates.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I ask is this pertinent to the Consular Service? The Motion refers to the inadequacy of the Consular Service, and I am not aware that this has anything to do with that subject.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: The second part of my Motion is that "it is essential for the safeguarding and promotion of the commercial and political interests of the British Empire that adequate steps should be taken to maintain and extend our commercial treaty rights," and I take it that our commercial treaty rights are invaded by the bounty system. I specially notice with astonishment that no protest has been made by the Government or by their supporters, and especially in the numerous speeches delivered by the ex-Colonial Secretary, in condemnation of this extended system of bounties by which Canada is strangling our iron and steel industry. The right hon. Gentleman told us how he had condemned the strangling of the sugar trade of the West Indies by the Continental sugar bounties. Why do not he and his followers equally condemn the system of bounties so widely extended in Canada, and which is absolutely strangling our iron and steel trade? Is the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield not aware that in the year ending the 30th June last, in addition to their protective duties, the Canadian Government gave in the shape of bounties $1,400,000 to Canadian iron and steel makers; and is he not aware that in the current year they are going to give them $2,000,000? I was told in Ottawa in October last that the new Canadian Railway from the Atlantic to the Pacific, the making of which was about to begin, would require 3,000,000 tons of steel rails, and that under the new system of bounties they did not expect to get a single rail from England; the whole would, they hoped, be made in Canada. Where is the prospect of the increase of trade in Canada from this country? While the Government have been hypocritically professing to be filled with concern about the trade of this country they have never uttered a word, nor has the ex-Colonial Secretary, who is misleading the nation, as to the true trade relations between this country and Canada.

Turning to another great question on which the Government have, in my opinion, failed to maintain and extend our just commercial treaty rights, let me instance the case of China, with its 400,000,000 of population. If that great country were to increase its trade to the same extent as the trade of Japan has been increased, it would be doing to-day seven times more over-sea trade than it is now doing. For the five years ended 1901, the United States trebled their trade with China, whereas the trade of the United Kingdom fell 15½ per cent. In 1902 the trade of China increased £7,000,000 sterling. The noble Lord smiles; but how much of that £7,000,000 did we secure? We secured only £1,000,000 or 14 per cent., whereas our average previously of the entire trade of China had been 46 per cent. That shows how we are losing ground with regard to our trade with China. There is another point also. Take the shipping trade, upon which we so much depend for the continuance of our prosperity. The shipping trade during the ten years ended 1902, so far as China is concerned, went down 15½ per cent., whereas the trade of Germany during that period increased 8 per cent and the trade of Japan 12 per cent. To what causes may this falling off in British trade be attributed? I think I shall be able to show that it is largely due to the British Government failing to give the same vigorous support to British commercial interests in China as has been given by the Governments of competing nations.

Take the case of railways. China, the richest Empire on earth, is for the first time being supplied with a system of railways. The Government told us in this House with a great flourish of trumpets that British concessionnaires had got concessions for 2,800 miles of these railways. But not one single concession has yet been ratified, whereas Russia, France, Germany, Belgium and the United States are busily engaged in laying down railways in China. We opened China to trade; we fought at least two wars at great cost to keep it open, and yet when this unequalled and unparalleled opportunity of large and profitable trade with China has arisen, we have no share or part or lot in the matter. Yet the British Government says that they are concerned as to the position of our trade and commerce. What did the noble Lord the Secretary of State admit himself last year, as regarded the construction of railways. He said that he freely admitted that we had much ground for complaint regarding the manner in which the Chinese Government had dealt with applications for concessions, that the Government had found it necessary to make strong remonstrances to the Chinese Government on the subject, and that Sir Ernest Satow would return to China fully aware of the views of the Government and with instructions to support them energetically. That is an absolute confession on the part of the Government of the failure of their efforts in respect of British investors and British manufacturers having a fair share in the work of supplying China with a system of railways. But that is not the worst of the case, because in connection with a great majority of the railway concessions granted by China to foreign nations there is to be found inserted a clause under which it is stipulated that the whole of the railway material and rolling stock required is to be drawn exclusively from the countries of the respective concessionnaires to the absolute exclusion of British manufacturers. That, in my opinion, is a violation on the part of the Chinese Government of the most-favoured-nation clause contained in the Treaty of Tientsin. These railways have been constructed by foreign nations for the Chinese Government. They purport to be Chinese railways; the Chinese Government have a right under certain conditions to take them over; and I submit it is a violation of the most-favoured-nation clause that we should be deprived of all chance of having any part in the supply of railway material and rolling stock for these railways. I am bound to say that all the blame does not attach to His Majesty's Government. Very great blame rests on the British syndicates who sought railway concessions and who, when they got them, failed to give effect to them. It is a disgrace to this country that whereas Belgian, French, American, and Russian investors found no difficulty whatever in raising the funds required to carry out their agreements with the Chinese Government, British subjects rest under the disgrace of having failed to fulfil their obligations. I think the British Government ought to try and encourage the entrance into the field of competition of other British investors, and that we should not hope too much from the existing syndicates.

Another important question, so far as British trade is concerned, is that some arrangement should be arrived at under which we shall enjoy equal rights in regard to railway rates over the Chinese railways with those enjoyed by the country constructing them. Lord Salisbury recognised the importance of this question, and gave instructions some years ago that this point should be very strongly pressed, and that some arrangement should be arrived at. The Russian Government in reply said, "Oh well, the railways are not yet built, and it will be soon enough to discuss the question of railway rates when they are," I should like to know from the noble Lord whether this important question is engaging the serious attention of His Majesty's Government.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): Preferential rates are prohibited by the Treaty of Tientsin.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I should like the noble Lord to quote the clause which confirms that view. But we ought not to rest too much on the Treaty of Tientsin. It has been superseded by the recent treaty between His Majesty's Government and China, and by other treaties with other Powers. It would have been infinitely better if this particular clause had been brought forward and introduced definitely into the new treaty.

*EARL PERCY: There is no doubt whatever that preferential rates would be contrary to our most-favoured-nation rights under the Treaty of Tientsin, which has not been superseded by the recent commercial agreement.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I should have imagined that a statesman of the experience of Lord Salisbury would not have thought it necessary to press this as a most important question if it had been already fully and satisfactorily secured by the Treaty of Tientsin. I have great doubt in my mind as to whether the explanation of the noble Lord will bear examination. I complain of the Government for having failed to arrange an equally satisfactory commercial treaty with China as has been concluded between the United States and China and Japan and China. Under our treaty with China one advantage is supposed to be the abolition of the Likin duties, but the Native Customs are continued not only on the coast but on the inland waterways and land trade routes in the interior of China. In the American treaty, however, these duties are limited to the ports and the land frontiers of China. It is perfectly true that in our treaty five new ports are to be opened, but four of these ports are conditional upon the treaty being accepted by all the other treaty Powers, and only one is conditional on the signing of the treaty. As regards our treaty commercial rights in Manchuria, all I will say is that while His Majesty's Government did not get a new treaty port in Manchuria, the United States succeeded in securing three, showing thereby that they regarded Manchuria as an integral part of the Chinese Empire. I should like to ask the noble Lord if he will tell us what Powers have assented to the British treaty; also whether the treaty came into force on the 1st January last, which was the date fixed. There are several provisions in that treaty which if brought into force would promote British trade and commerce. I should like to know whether the new rules relating to the inland waterways have come into force, and whether the five new treaty ports have been opened to trade, and, if not, when they will? Have the ports on the Yangtse River and West River been opened?

There is also another important question, and that is the grave and serious danger which now threatens British commercial interests in Manchuria. That great Province, with an area of 400,000 square miles and a population of 15,000,000, has great possibilities of expansion of trade. Last year its trade, although it has only one treaty port, was £6,000,000 sterling, of which the

British Empire secured 42 per cent. Russia, on the other hand, did *nil*. British shipping was 175,000 tons, Russian shipping 1,200 only, and yet the Government now in power allowed Russia, with no trade interest whatever, through the treaty port of Niu-chwang, to assume absolute military and civil control of the port. At the present moment Russian officials are in control of the Customs House, and collect customs duties to the tune of 1,500,000 taels a year, which they do not hand over to the Chinese Government although those duties are the security for British bondholders. They simply pay them to the Russo-Chinese Bank and what becomes of them no one knows. They are now in actual military and civil occupation of the port of Niu-chwang. It is quite true that they undertook to evacuate it on 8th October last, but they are there still, and I want to know from the noble Lord what steps have been, or are going to be taken, in the interest of British commercial and trading rights, by the Government to restore to the British traders the rights they are entitled to. We have had given to the Chinese Government given in this House; given in the House of Lords; published in the Press; a multitude of assurances as to Russia's intentions in regard to the evacuation of Manchuria and Niu-chwang, but these assurances remain unfulfilled. Before going into that, I say that in our new treaty there is no proper provision for securing to us the most-favoured-nation clause. There is only a very shadowy provision that we shall participate in the most-favoured-nation tariffs, but when I turn to the Japanese treaty I find it is expressly stipulated—

> "That the commerce rights and privileges of Japan shall not be placed at any disadvantage as compared with the commerce rights and privileges of any other Power."

The Japanese Government safeguard to themselves in that explicit fashion every right that may hereafter be granted to the subjects of other countries. Our Government do nothing of the sort. I have the treaty here, and I ask the noble Lord to point to any one clause of it and show where British trade is protected in the same manner. This treaty is only another example of the slipshod manner in which our treaties are framed and worded.

Now I turn to the Manchurian question. In 1895 the Russian Government addressed a communication to the Japanese Government—and I would especially ask the attention of the noble Lord to this quotation—in the following terms—

> "The Imperial Russian Government having examined the terms of peace demanded of China by Japan consider that the contemplated possession of the Liau-tung peninsula by Japan will not only constitute a constant menace to the capital of China, but will also render the independence of Korea illusory and thus jeopardise the permanent peace of the Far East. Accordingly the Imperial Government, in a spirit of cordial friendship for Japan, hereby counsel the Government of the Emperor of Japan to renounce the definitive possession of the Liau-tung peninsula."

Then in 1898, in the Manchurian railway agreement between Japan and Russia, Russia says—

> "This railway concession is never to be used as a pretext for encroachment on Chinese territory, nor to be allowed to interfere with Chinese authority or interests."

Nothing could be more explicit than that. Then we come to 1902, and what is known as the Manchurian Convention, and then we have it stated that—

> "Russia consents to the re-establishment of Chinese authority in Manchuria, which remains an integral portion of the Chinese Empire, and restores to China the right to exercise sovereign and administrative powers as before the occupation by Russian troops."

I especially draw the noble Lord's attention to that. Russia, Sir!

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I would point out to the hon. Member that though, as he is now speaking of the main question, he is entitled to refer to these matters, but his present observations are not pertinent to his Amendment, and the noble Lord will not be permitted to answer them when the Amendment has been put from the Chair.

*Mr. JOSEPH WALTON: The point I was attempting to make, Sir, was that our trade interests were not being protected.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member appeared to have gone beyond that, and gone into the territorial question.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: I had no desire to transgress, and the question on this occasion is really this: Russia undertakes to restore to China the sovereign and administrative power in Manchuria, as before the occupation by Russian troops, my point being that unless the sovereignty of Manchuria is restored to China, our treaty rights will not be protected. But we had some assurances also in regard to the evacuation by Russia of Manchuria. On 30th April Lord Cranborne announced in this House of Commons—

> "That the Russian Government disclaim all intention of seeking for exclusive privileges in Manchuria or departing from the assurances given in respect of that province."

And then again, on the 11th of May, in reply to a Question I put to the noble Lord in this House he told us—

> "In reply to independent friendly communications which during the last few days have been addressed to the Russian Government by the Government of the United States and of His Majesty, the Russian Government have intimated that they adhere to the engagements into which they have entered to evacuate Manchuria; though the evacuation has been temporarily delayed."

I do not desire to enter into any territorial question in China, because we have no territorial questions there. All we desire, in common with the United States of America and other nations, is to maintain the integrity of China and equal opportunity for all nations to trade there. What I would ask the noble Lord to do is to give the House some proof that the Government have not been unmindful of our great commercial interests in that great Empire. It seems to me in the present deplorable condition of affairs in the Far East there should be some mediation by Powers like ourselves and America to press upon Russia the necessity of observing her pledges with regard to Manchuria, and thus avert war. On the Government at the present moment rests the most supreme responsibility, and the eyes of the whole of the civilised world are upon them as to the action they take.

But it is not only with regard to China that we have to complain. Take the treaty with Persia last year; was a more slipshod treaty ever signed? It was presented to us with only the signature of Mr. Naus, the Belgian head of Customs, on behalf of the Shah of Persia. What I complain of is that this Government, which claims to have such a deep interest in upholding and promoting the prosperity of the trade and commerce of this country, actually sanctioned a treaty with Persia which gave Russia great preferences over this country. Under the Treaty of Turkomanchai of 1828, we had equal rights and privileges, 5 per cent. *ad valorem*. Under the treaty of last year that 5 per cent. was raised to 100 per cent. in the case of tea and 8 per cent. in the case of cotton, while the duty on Russian petroleum has been reduced from 5 per cent. to 3 per cent. In ten years ending 1901, Russian trade with Persia increased 125 per cent. while for the same period British trade declined 33 per cent.

Now, let me turn to the question of British treaty rights with Madagascar. No one rejoices more than I do at the establishment of the *entente cordiale* between the great French speaking nation and ourselves. What are the facts in regard to British trade with Madagascar? Formerly we had 95 per cent. of the trade; now we have 5 per cent., and the falling off is due to the absolute surrender by the Government of British commercial treaty rights with Madagascar. Moreover, our trade has been curtailed in Tunis, and I say that in view of the present friendly relations between the two countries, His Majesty's Government will be failing in their duty towards the trade and commerce of the kingdom if they do not make vigorous efforts to secure better treatment for us. Turning to the West Coast of Africa, I submit that the Government have failed to uphold the rights and interests of British traders in the Congo—especially the French Congo. At a time when it is said that our trade is going to the dogs, I suggest that the measures I have indicated—the reorganisation of the Consular Service, the making of it more effective for the promotion of British trade, and the maintenance and extension of our just commercial treaty rights all the world over—are practical means for increasing the prosperity of British trade, and I hope that the noble Lord will be able to give us satisfactory assurances on these matters.

If he would assure us that, instead of asking for a loaded revolver with which to enter upon a fiscal war with the whole universe, the Foreign Secretary will devote his earnest attention to remedying the defects I have pointed out, he would secure much more practical benefit to British trade than by any illusory schemes of fiscal retaliation. The question of British trade and commerce is not a Party question, for surely Members on both sides and their constituents are equally interested in upholding and extending the prosperity of the trade and commerce of the country. I beg to move.

MR. RIGG (Westmoreland, Appleby) formally seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed at the end of the Question to add the words—

"'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is essential for the safeguarding and promotion of the commercial and political interests of the British Empire that adequate steps should be taken to maintain and extend our commercial treaty rights, and that the Consular Service should be reorganised and strengthened on lines calculated to make it more effective for the promotion of the trade of the British Empire.'"—(*Mr. Joseph Walton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

*EARL PERCY: The hon. Member has dwelt with great insistence—and with a pessimism which is not frequently reflected in the speeches of his Party when dealing with our fiscal policy—on the importance of British trade, especially in China. We all recognise the great importance of our trade interests in China. It is almost a common-place. The loss of the Chinese market would be a severe blow to our present trade; the loss of the prospective markets of China would be a still more serious blow to our trade of the future. We all admit the premises of the hon. Gentleman, but when upon those premises he proceeds to build an argument implying that it is the duty of the British Government to maintain, and increase British trade, I must demur from his proposition. So long as we adhere to our present fiscal policy, that is not only not the duty of the British Government, but it is beyond our power. Hitherto we have deliberately adhered to our old system of drawing a clear line of demarcation between the province of the State and the province of the individual trader. We have deliberately adopted an attitude of *laissez faire*, or at least, of benevolent neutrality towards the efforts of British commercial enterprise. We altogether decline to use State credit for the purpose of financing or aiding industrial or commercial undertakings abroad; and we do not use our tariff for the purpose of imparting an artificial stimulus to our export trade. Foreign countries adopt the very opposite policy. They not only act as the foster-mothers of their own trade, but they might almost be said to be traders on their own account. By a great variety of expedients—the protection of the home market, bounties on exports, drawbacks, preferential railway rates, subsidies to shipping, and guaranteed loans for railway enterprise abroad—they do everything in their power to maintain their hold on existing markets, and to capture new ones; and they test the success of that policy, not by the burden of taxation which it throws upon their own subjects, but by the resultant increase of their export trade. It is well that we should understand one another. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham recently impressed upon an audience the necessity of learning to think Imperially. I think it is equally important that we should learn to think clearly. I should very much like to know what is the policy of the hon. Gentleman opposite. Does he desire that we should change our policy, and adopt that of foreign countries in these matters? If the Party opposite desire that, let them say so, and we shall be prepared to discuss it.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: Change your policy of "drift."

*EARL PERCY: If, however, they are perfectly satisfied with improved technical education, with more Charlottenburg schools, with a remodelled and extended Consular Service, then all I say is—that measures of this kind, however desirable, form but an insignificant part of the machinery on which our foreign competitors rely to take away our trade, and as complete remedies they would not be effective. Unless we are prepared to go very much further, what is the use of indulging in all this hollow rhetoric about the British Government not affording the same amount of support to their nationals that is afforded by foreign Governments to theirs? I entirely deny that the decline of British trade, such as it is, is to be traced to the causes to which the hon. Member refers. As I have said, so long as our present fiscal policy is adhered to, it is not the duty of the British Government to maintain and increase our commerce; that is the duty of British traders. The duty of the Government is to keep clear the avenues and to increase, if possible, the opportunities for commerce, and to see that the open door is really open, and not merely ajar.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: But you do not do it.

*EARL PERCY: It is by that test, and that test alone, that our policy must be judged. The hon. Member will forgive me if I do not follow him into such ancient history as that of our commercial treaty with Madagascar. That has been often discussed in this House, and I think everybody is perfectly aware of the circumstances of the case. When the French first went to Madagascar and established a Protectorate, we did obtain a definite assurance that they would continue to respect the treaty rights which we had obtained from the native Government. Subsequently, when they converted the protectorate into annexation, they held that by the act of annexation they had dispensed themselves from the necessity of acting any longer upon assurance. We did not hold that view at the time, and we not hold it now; we protested at the time, and we have continued to protest. I do not know that there is anything more to be said about it except that it is an experience by which we should do well to profit when we are engaged in negotiations of the same kind, so that, knowing the view the French Government take of the effect of annexation, we may avoid similar misunderstanding in the future.

Then the hon. Member passed from Madagascar to Persia, and criticised our commercial treaty. To begin with I should like to make two corrections. The hon. Member seemed to think that the mode in which the signatures were appended to the treaty constituted a departure from precedent. It did nothing of the kind. The document was signed in the French text by the English plenipotentiaries, and in the Persian text by the Persian plenipotentiaries. Then he said we had gratuitously prevented our Colonies from giving to the mother country preferential treatment. We did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, we took care to obtain a special assurance from the Persian Government that nothing in the treaty would prevent the Colonies from giving preferential treatment to the mother country.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: That assurance is not in the treaty.

*EARL PERCY: No, and there is nothing in the treaty which binds the Persian Government regarding the preferences given by the colonies to the mother country.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: Oh yes, there is.

*EARL PERCY: At all events, the Persian Government takes a different view from the hon. Gentleman. Then he says that in that treaty we are worse off than we were under the old treaty. Yes, and I am very glad he has drawn attention to the fact; it is an admirable illustration of the value to us of the most-favoured-nation clause, which hon. Members opposite seem to regard as the sheet-anchor of our commercial prosperity. For something like half a century, up to last year, British trade in Persia depended exclusively on most-favoured-nation treatment under the Russian treaty. The time came when the Persian Government was in need of money, and wished to substitute a new commercial treaty for the old one, and the Russians in negotiating the new commercial treaty took very great care of their own interests and were not specially careful to safeguard the interests of Great Britain. No one can say that that was satisfactory to us, but the blame attaches to both Governments—Liberal as well as Conservative. I think the hon. Member might have given the present Government the credit of having been the first Government who have taken the trouble to put our commercial rights in Persia beyond doubt and secure for us not only the same rights as the Russian Government obtained, but also a definite security that the rate of duties cannot be again raised on British commerce without our consent. I am happy to inform the hon. Member that although, on the face of it, that that treaty did seem likely to have an injurious effect on British trade, it has not had that effect so far as we have been able to ascertain. I have got out the figures of the imports during the first quarters of 1902–3 and 1903–4. I give them in quantities and not in value. The Customs returns show that in the period March to June, 1903–4, the import of Russian tea increased by 398 maunds, while the import of tea from the British Empire increased by 92,855 maunds. The increase in cotton tissues from Russia was 140,288 maunds whilst the increase for the British Empire was 268,738 maunds. So far as we are able to ascertain the facts the Treaty has not had any really serious effect in diminishing British exports to Persia. The hon. Member went on to discuss the position in China. He referred to our trade there, and he seemed to think that it had steadily and even rapidly diminished. I do not want to weary the House by quoting any more statistics, but I assure the House that that is not so, but British trade, on the contrary, is now steadily rising. There was a period just after the Boxer trouble when there was a certain diminution, but since then it has more than recovered its former level. The hon. Member dealt with the question of railway concessions. If we consider merely the mileage obtained by British as compared with foreign concessionaires, our record compares very favourably with theirs. It is quite true that there has been a regrettable delay in materialising those concessions, and so far as that is due to the action of the Chinese Government, we have lost no opportunity of urging them to accelerate the proceedings, and I am happy to say that, at the present moment the prospects of British railway enterprise in China are better than they have been for a long time past. In August last year an understanding was arrived at with Prince Ching under which the Pekin Syndicate's line north of the Yellow River is to have a Chinese Government guarantee, and the promise obtained by the British and China Corporation to construct a railway from Pukon opposite Nanking to join the Luhan line at Sinyang has been confirmed. We have also obtained a promise from the Chinese Government that whenever the time arrives when they wish to have a railway built from the Yangtze to Szechuan and they are not able to find the funds themselves they will apply to British capital. The hon. Member has alluded to the question of railway material and he seems to think that there are certain clauses in the contracts made by foreign companies with the Chinese Government compelling them to order all their railway material from a particular source, which would constitute a violation of the most-favoured-nation treatment. As far as we are aware, there is no clause of such a character in those contracts and we shall be glad if the hon. Member will give us any definite information on that point. He has also alluded to the commercial treaty signed by ourselves and China last year, and he is much aggrieved that we did not insert in that treaty a clause asserting our right to most-favoured-nation treatment. As I said before, there is no need for such a clause, because it does not supersede the Treaty of Tientsin, and under that treaty our right to the most-favoured-nation treatment is safeguarded. The new British commercial treaty came into operation in July last year, and not January of this year as the hon. Member said. Article VIII. will come into force when it has been accepted by the other Powers. With regard to treaty ports Kongmoon has been already opened by Imperial decree and has been a port of call ever since the West River was opened to steamers. Nanning Fu has also been opened by Imperial decree. It was discovered that steamers cannot easily reach Nanning Fu, and that as regards trade it is not the important place it was at one time supposed to be. Therefore no steps have been taken either by the Chinese Government or our own Government to establish a Customs House or Consuls there. As regards ports of call on the West River eight ports have been opened for passenger traffic. Rules for inland navigation have been issued by Sir Robert Hart, and provisional regulations for carrying out the stipulations of the Treaty have been approved by the Chinese Foreign Office. There was no provision in the Treaty for the creation of a conservancy at Canton, but a survey of the harbour has been carried out by a Chinese revenue steamer with a view to the removal of obstructions. At Whangpo a Board was to be formed. It has not, however, been constituted yet owing to the delay of the Chinese Government in appointing their representative. We have made frequent representations on the subject; and it will become necessary if the Chinese Government do not appoint their representative to proceed with the constitution of the Board without him. I do not know whether the hon. Member expects me this afternoon to go into a comparison of the advantages between the British treaty and the treaties made with the United States and Japan. I dispute entirely that the United States treaty is superior to ours. On the contrary, the United States treaty omits provisions of the utmost importance to British trade. As regards their two treaty ports, it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to appoint and send out Consuls to both Mukden and Antung.

The hon. Member asked me a general question with reference to the situation in Manchuria as bearing on the treaty rights of this country. I do not want to discuss that subject in detail for very obvious reasons, but I may say that no effective steps have been taken to carry out the evacuation of Manchuria since the House rose. After the notification by Admiral Alexieff in May that the province of Shingking was to be evacuated, as the hon. Gentleman is no doubt aware, Mukden was again reoccupied by Russian troops. As regards Niu-chwang the hon. Gentleman has correctly stated the position. The maritime Customs are still paid into the Russo-Chinese bank to the credit of the Russian Government. As regards the native Customs which also form part of the security for the Indemnity and were to be administered by the staff of the Inspector-General, we are informed that they have lately been placed under a Russian nominee and the representative of the Imperial maritime Customs has been removed. A Blue-book will shortly be published, which will deal with Manchuria alone, and which will contain a very full account of all the historical events and of our action in regard to them from the date of the Boxer rising. The hon. Member has referred to the assurances given by Russia. On the 8th January the latest of these assurancos was made to Lord Lansdowne in the following declaration by the Russian Government—

> "In order to prevent all misunderstanding and misconstruction Russia considers it indispensable, independently of the conditions which will in the future definitely determine the character of her relations with Manchuria, to declare from this day forth that she has no intention whatever of placing any obstacle in the way of the continued enjoyment by foreign Powers of the rights acquired by them in virtue of treaties now in force."

Count Benckendorff subsequently explained on 19th January, in answer to an inquiry by Lord Lansdowne, that this assurance meant that whatever changes might hereafter be introduced in the relations of Russia and Manchuria the Powers would preserve the rights which they enjoyed under existing treaties. I will only say one word in conclusion in answer to the hon. Gentleman's enquiries with regard to the Consular Service. The recommendations of the Committee that sat last session to consider the new regulations to be drawn up for the Consular Service have been under the consideration of the Secretary of State, and the general principles of these recommendations have received his approval. We hope very shortly to be able to make a more distinct statement on the subject. If these recommendations are carried out we hope that the Consular Service in the future will contain a larger element drawn from the commercial class. A certain number of vacancies will probably be set aside for candidates who have had a commercial training, and they will spend some time subsequent to their examination in the Intelligence Department of the Board of Trade. In regard to the Consular Trade Reports which the hon. Gentleman finds so unsatisfactory, a circular was issued to Consuls in the course of 1902 drawing attention to the point the hon. Gentleman has mentioned, that these Reports are too often overloaded with matter which is not properly commercial to the exclusion of matter which is of special interest to the mercantile community, and also defining the points on which information is required.

*Mr. JOSEPH WALTON asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question again proposed.

FISCAL POLICY.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs) moved the Amendment of which he had given notice in regard to the fiscal policy of the country. He said: I am sorry to know, though this Amendment has been postponed for some days, that even now we shall not be able to have the advantage of the presence of the Prime Minister. I do not know whether he will be able to attend before the debate is concluded, but in any case, however that may be, I am sure I need not tell the House how much, both personally and on public grounds, I regret his absence. There is one other right hon. Gentleman, only less important, if indeed less important, than the Prime Minister, whose presence I understand we are not to look for during the course of this debate. I refer, of course, to my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham. I hope I shall not be trespassing beyond the proprieties of the occasion if I mention that I have known the right hon. Gentleman for half a life-time. During all those years I was in close and intimate relations with him, and I do not think I will allow any differences of opinion upon public questions—and between him and me they are, and have been, profound, and never more profound than they are to-day—to prevent me from saying, if the House will permit me, that he possesses in a most marked and peculiar degree the genius of friendship—sincere, kind, and staunch friendship. Mr. Powell Williams, who, a few hours ago passed away from our great world-theatre, found friends amongst us all. But to the Member for West Birmingham he was more than an ordinary friend. He was one who, in sunshine and in storm, was his close, faithful, and trusted adherent; and I for one, and I believe in all parts of the House hon. Gentlemen will agree with me, fully comprehend and entirely respect the feeling which has mastered the Member for West Birmingham.

It has been suggested to me that, as these two great protagonists of—I do not know whether I should call them rival policies or of identical policies—are unable to take part in this debate, we should postpone it. I cannot myself, for one moment, think that a well-founded view. I think we are bound in this House to take the very first opportunity of bringing to the test of a discussion at close quarters the question that has agitated the mind of the country for the last four or five months, and we ought to know—it is our duty to know—where the House stands, where Ministers stand, and where the question stands. I think quite long enough, and too long, has it been the case that this House, of all places in the island, is the only place where this question has not been, and apparently is not to be, discussed. We think the House of Commons would be wanting in one of its first duties, perhaps its most fundamental duty, if it were not to take this opportunity of raising the question which arises on my Amendment. After all, its highest constitutional function is to examine the national charges, to survey national ways and means, to adjust the national burden. We are going this session to do so in remarkable—I think in unprecedented—circumstances. We have not only the well-known announcement of the Prime Minister, which I will not trouble at this stage to introduce, that he is for a deep and genuine change in our fiscal policy—that we are to annul and delete the traditions of two generations. We have also from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Minister who is specially responsible for the financial administration of the country, a strong declaration that "the time has come when we should make a breach with the traditions of the past"—I think he must have forgotten that he is on the Conservative side of the House—"and that we should allow ourselves to think for ourselves." That is very impressive, but does that Bench think for themselves? Then he says:—"We are making progress." Who are "we," and where is the progress to? The right hon. Gentleman will, no doubt, answer us those questions; but, be that as it may, it is indispensable that, if we are to discuss our financial situation, the supreme business of the House, with real efficacy, we must know whether we have got a protectionist or an anti-protectionist Government to guide us. It is not very easy to be quite sure of that. We are apt, in this House, to regard with suspicion, and perhaps with a trace of mockery, anybody who introduces a Motion, and begins by saying that it is not a Party Motion. I venture respectfully to submit to the House that I can make that claim to-day, because my Amendment will, unless I am greatly mistaken, be most powerfully reinforced, perhaps even more powerfully than we could argue it on this side, by Gentlemen who are sitting among yourselves, by Gentlemen who a few months ago were amongst your most trusted and responsible and experienced leaders and Members. That is one thing which, I think, divests my Amendment of a Party aspect purely. And I would venture another, however insignificant, observation of a personal kind, that in economics and finance, so gravely do I, for my part, always regard these questions—much more gravely than purely political questions—that when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol was Chancellor of the Exchequer he will remember that I voted freely away from my friends who sit near me, and that I supported the Government on the coal tax and on the sugar tax. But the last straw—the corn duty—broke my back, and I could support him and the Government no more. I do not often regale myself by reading old speeches of my own, but when I went over again the observations which I had to address to the House in moving the rejection of the Report stage of the Corn Duty Clause of the Finance Bill, I really was astonished, not at my own moderation, but at my own foresight. Every observation that I made almost has been verified by the scenes of the last few months. I warned the then Chancellor of the Exchequer that he was entering upon a course which would inevitably lead him or his Party to colonial preference and to a tax upon food—to proposals for a tax upon food.

Well now, the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Tuesday last referred to some language I had used implying that the state of the industries of the country was not all that we could desire. I have always held for the last eight years the same language. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham on this point. I have said it again and again both inside this House and outside this House. There is a great deal in the state of the commerce and industry, and of the employment of our population which must give every serious and observant man plenty of food for reflection. I have always in the country wound up with the declaration of the late Lord Salisbury, which was that there is ground for anxiety, that no statesman can look around and see these new conditions without anxiety; but then Lord Salisbury went on to say—

> "That is no reason why we should grasp at the first remedy that any man chooses to propose to us."

Sir, if the House will, for an instant, pardon an historical reference: during the last sixty years, which we are going to refer to so often in the course of this debate, the first step was Sir Robert Peel's liberation from the tariff of a certain number of articles in 1842. There then followed, in 1860, eighteen years afterwards, what Mr. Gladstone always used to call the cardinal and organic emancipatory free trade period. During that time, first by Sir Robert Peel and then Mr. Gladstone, an enormous number of articles were removed from the tariff which restricted trade, which interfered with the application of capital, and which presented the free exercise of skill and industry. I am not sure that it was 1860; anyhow, by 1860 or 1866 that great emancipatory period was concluded. And these were all occasions of the most remarkable kind. And there was what the right hon. Member for Bristol will admit, a further important step taken, not in this House, nor by a statesman, but by the constituencies in the year 1874, when they by their rejection of the proposals then made to them for the abolition of the income-tax, settled finally that the income-tax was to be a permanent instrument of the national revenue. There are three or four stages of which I venture to remind the House. It may be; we do not know yet whether the new movement that began on 15th May last year was a conflagration or whether it is to prove merely the flash of a meteor; I hope that this debate will perhaps clear the air a little on that issue; but anyhow there is this peculiarity in the situation in which we have now entered. In 1843 the state of the finances of the country, the state of the industry of the country, the dilapidation of the revenue, were so marked that it was the urgent duty of the Ministry of that day at once to set to work to remedy so deplorable a state of things. That was what Sir Robert Peel did in 1846. There was scarcity and famine which cried aloud for legislation; and in 1860 there were particular relations between this country and France. At that moment there was also an accidental state of things in the Exchequer which precipated the occasion of which Mr. Gladstone took advantage. Upon all those occasions there was urgency; and even, if I may refer to 1886, when a very great and important step was taken by the Prime Minister of that day, which divided Parties, as Parties are divided now, there was urgency. If the Prime Minister had been here now I am sure he would have agreed with me that the solution which we then propounded to this House and to the country and which this House first and the country afterwards rejected—whether that solution of Home Rule was right or wrong—there was in the state of Ireland a condition of social order, and there was in this House a state of Parties which made it a question of urgency. But where is the urgency for the change that the Ministry now propose? What is the crisis, what is the emergency? I know that all controversies are liable to expand and to grow; and after the very effective treatment which my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition gave to the history of this crisis last Tuesday night. I am not going to repeat it to the House. But the change, everybody knows is expressed in a sentence. This new fiscal policy was sprung upon the country. I do not use the word "sprung" in an invidious sense; but it was launched from the colonial point of view. The colonial point of view pretty rapidly disappeared. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no."] The hon. Member who says "No," if he takes part in the debate later, will perhaps tell us how he regards the position of the colonial policy. It disappeared, and a new case was presented. It was then that the industry and commerce of the country were languishing and declining, and demanded a prompt and immediate treatment (that was the new case), and that a remedy should be provided with the utmost despatch. It was rather odd, because it was not long before the Member for West Birmingham, who first launched the policy, had in tones of perfectly natural jubilation congratulated the country that it had been able to bear the enormous financial burden of the Boer war without turning a hair. But I see opposite to me the President of the Board of Trade. Very likely he will do me the honour to follow me in this debate. The President of the Board of Trade this time last year did not think that there was any crisis or any emergency. This is the language of the President of the Board of Trade to his constituents on 23rd January, 1903—

> "He confessed that he did not see any signs of the decline and ruin of British industry which was the prominent topic with the British newspapers, and though the critics might have done good by drawing attention to the shortcoming, they could have too much even of a good thing, and he was bound to say that he thought the part of Cassandra had been somewhat overdone. He thought that in this matter they could do well with a little of the optimism which distinguished Mr. Chamberlain."

I respectfully ask the right hon. Gentleman to tell us when he rises whether in his view there was an emergency then. Surely not! Then what happened within three or four months? The President of the Board of Trade seems to have been led by the Member for West Birmingham into a completely new and reverse position, and we should be glad to know whether now he thinks, he having used the language which I have just read to the House, that agriculture is destroyed — [Sir HOWARD VINCENT: Hear, hear!]—and all the rest of it. I should listen to him with the most respectful attention. Will he tell us why he has changed his mind, if he has changed his mind? Is there any indication or the smallest evidence of there being a crisis or an emergency except an artificial and invented crisis? The Prime Minister himself, I think at Bristol, said that he would have been very glad if circumstances—I do not know quite what the circumstances were—allowed him to leave this question, which was an urgent question, as an open question in his Cabinet. If it had been a critical or an urgent question, it would not have been an open question. There is no doubt about that. There is another point about that which I address to the President of the Board of Trade. The Government instituted what they called an inquiry — a proceeding which the Duke of Devonshire, although a party to it, describes publicly as having proved a deception. But the Member for West Birmingham speaks in the most contemptuous language of the inquiry instituted by the Board of Trade. He says that this Blue-book is the library of the free importers, meaning by that the whole contents of that Blue-book are a library of arguments for free importers. [Cries of "No."]

I will not detain the House long in arguing the second clause of my Amendment, namely, "that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the nation." You may dispute, if you please; I fully admit how many other elements there are that have entered into that most prosperous and satisfactory state of things which, until the other day, we were all agreed in recognising. Of course there were other elements which may have entered, but any hon. Member who endeavours to make an adjustment of the degree to which this prosperity is due to free trade, or to other elements, I warn him that he will enter upon a task of the most intricate and complex character. This I do venture to say, without fear of contradiction from hon. Gentlemen opposite or an where else, that the condition precedent to this country's being able to avail itself of the various other elements, such as railways and other things which have been good for the country, was free trade. If I may be allowed to indulge for a moment in a philosophical reflection, you may say, if you please, that the decision, by the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846, to make the ideal of those islands a manufacturing community, instead of an agricultural community—you may say, if you like, that that was a wrong decision. But I am no great idolater of the factory system. I think it has produced, and I refer to them in my Amendment, a state of things which needs manifest and urgent remedies. I remember Mr. Mill, formerly a Member of this House and much more than a Member of this House. He used to tell us that if the alternative was between Socialism and the evil social condition then, as now, prevailing in many parts of these islands, though against Socialism, he would rather face Socialism with all its risks than acquiesce in the subsisting state of things. But it is not worth arguing now. If England is to be characteristically a manufacturing community, the man who denies that free imports actively conduce, and not only conduce but are indispensable, to our commerce and the welfare of our population—I say such a man, whoever he may be, shows himself so grossly ignorant of the social conditions of the country between the end of the great war and the time of Sir Robert Peel that I will not waste the time of the House in arguing against him. Then there is another position taken by some of the disputants in this controversy—I will not argue with them if they say it is matter of history and fact that protective duties were removed on the faith of anticipations and prophecies of imitation by other countries. To make that assertion is to be guilty of a ludicrous falsification of all you will read in speeches by Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Cobden, or anybody else; it is not worth argument. The effect of protective duties had been so examined by the country, had been so repudiated by the country, that the free trade policy, which was not only passed in this House in 1846, but was ratified by the general election in 1847, was held fast to all through the years from 1847 to 1852, when there was another general election, and the country still repudiated, having had bitter experience, anything like a return to protective duties. Mr. Disraeli himself, the Leader of your Party, said the country had decided, and therefore it would be a culpable waste of time to argue whether the country had good or bad reasons for its dislike of protective duties.

I am not going to take the House—and I am sure they will thank me for it—into all the controversy, or points of controversy even, in the discussions that have taken place during the last few months in the country; but I should like to call the attention of the House to what I call general fallacies—not fallacies of statistics, though they were fallacious enough—but general fallacies that seem to me to have pervaded these discussions. It is a very short list, though I do not believe there is a single fallacy that has not found illustration in speeches from hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on that Bench. This is the method. You take every case that is hypothetically possible, theoretically imaginable or conceivable, and immediately treat that as if it were an actual case and an urgent case. Then you begin with the economical argument, and when you find that the ground will not bear you you then change ground suddenly, and, dropping the economical argument, take refuge in sentimental, idealist, or political arguments. The third method, which has struck me very much, is that you show that circumstances might arise which might justify a tariff as the proper expedient, and then you proceed to infer that the argument is exactly as valid for existing circumstances, though these are entirely different from your hypothetical case. Then you state a fact, and if that fact is completely demolished in two or three days, you then say that it was an illustration, not an argument. I have read a number of speeches in which hon. Gentlemen opposite have been literally guilty of supposing that a protective duty is the same thing as a revenue duty, though, of course, a protective duty is the exact opposite of a revenue duty and thoroughly ill-adapted for all the purposes of a revenue duty. And then about the consumer and imports strange language has been used. The consumer has been spoken of as if he were a sort of habitual inebriate, and every import as if it were an affront to the British Empire. There is one argument I wish to deal with, the argument that times have changed and that conditions of industry have altered in our day. That is not at all an unnatural position to take, but I submit boldly to the House that not one of the changes that have taken place since 1846—I think there is not one which does not make against protection and in favour of free trade. I maintain further that protection will aggravate every one of the mischiefs of which you complain. The first argument is, "Oh, since then — [Sir HOWARD VINCENT, Hear, hear!]—there have sprung up great rivals." The hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield ironically cheers that. Does he suppose that any statesman dreamed in 1846 that Great Britain was going to be the manufacturer to all eternity for the whole universe? [Sir HOWARD VINCENT: Mr. Cobden said so.] I probably know a great deal more about Cobden than the hon. and gallant Gentleman, and I say that so far was he from saying that that he said exactly the opposite. I am prompted by the interruption of the hon. and gallant Member to read an extract of a few sentences from Mr. Cobden. When I regard the contemptuous language used about Mr. Cobden by men who are unworthy to loosen his shoe latchet, I venture to recall to the House language—very beautiful language, well worthy of his genius—used by Mr. Disraeli. Standing, I suppose, at this box, when Mr. Cobden died, Mr. Disraeli said—

> "Thus our great men, when taken from us, are not altogether lost. Though not present, they are still Members of this House, independent of the caprice of constituencies, independent of dissolutions of Parliament, independent of the course of time. Their example will long be referred to and appealed to, and their words will often be quoted."

This was the language used by a Leader of your Party, a Leader who really led. Now, in reference to the hon. and gallant Member's statement that Mr. Cobden held out the expectation that this country would remain without manufacturing rivals, I will ask the House to listen to this extract—

> "Looking at the natural endowments of the North American continent, at the boundless expanse of the most fertile soil in the world, at the inexhaustible mines of coal, iron, lead."

Looking at these, the writer reiterates the moral of his former work, declaring his conviction that it is from

> "the silent, peaceful rivalry of American commerce, and the growth of American manufactures,"

and so on, that the

> "grandeur of our commercial and national prosperity is most endangered.'

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: What is the date of this statement of Mr. Cobden's?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I cannot say offhand, but I will satisfy the hon. and gallant Gentleman. It was the base of the whole policy, and it is, I hope, the base of the policy of us who sit on this side of the House, that it is exactly because you have this formidable competition to face that you should pursue a policy of peace, of reduced expenditure, and a policy of national education. That was the base of the whole of Mr. Cobden's national policy. But I must hurry on. The more formidable the competition is, the more reason is there why you should leave as much freedom as possible for the application of capital, for the exercise of skill and industry, and the general operations of trade. The second change is that you have all over the land enormous aggregates of population in manufacturing towns. Is that an argument for protection? Is it not an argument, the strongest you can use, for leaving all the channels by which food and raw materials find their way to our shores not narrow, not blocked? There is no argument for protection in that change. Then there have been, no doubt, enormous developments in steam locomotion and in telegraphic communication, having the effect of producing enormous mobility of capital and rapidity of transit of products from place to place. Granting all this, how can these great changes, these great material changes, be utilised to the uttermost unless you have open ports? Every change of this kind, if it means one thing more clearly than any other, means that protection in any form would be the most ruinous step you could possibly take.

There is another change. The Colonies have accomplished great permanent power and prosperity. Yes, but I invite attention to this. Suppose that the policy of protection should tend to diminish the protective and accumulative power of this country, and should impoverish this country, what worse thing could happen to the Colonies than such an event as that? The Colonies have almost more to lose than we have by our impoverishment. Diminish our plentiful supply of capital, or our cheap and rapid means of locomotion, and all these boons which we are able to place at their disposal would be either stopped or limited; and I say that the demands of the Colonies are one of the strongest arguments for an anti-protection policy. There is another great change—the transfer of political power, since 1846, from the old £10 householders to the artisans of the towns and the labourers of the fields. I am not going to argue the effect of free trade upon political peace, but I would submit to the House that it cannot be quite an accident — it cannot be a fortuitous coincidence — that the great free trade country of Europe is the one great country of Western Europe which since 1846 has never known even a shadow of a civil convulsion. There is no great country in the West of Europe which equals us in the absence from class division, class envy, hatred, and strife which unfortunately prevails in some other countries. It cannot be that that circumstance is entirely unconnected with our fiscal policy. There is one other change of great importance, no doubt — the Suez Canal. That has made an enormous difference in many ways, and the effect upon the international trade of the world and the effect on our position as a great distributing centre has been of course enormous. But will the President of the Board of Trade tell me accurately, with chapter and verse, how a scientific tariff which is to affect the wool market or the tea market is to prevent that from having changed the position in London as I understand it has. This is the thing. You hear of the Suez Canal doing this or that in the redistribution of commodities, and then you say, "the thing is wrong, we will put it right," but a scientific tariff would not put it right. How could it? Many Members of the House who are well versed in these things will perhaps tell us. I will listen with absolute interest and candour to any demonstration they can offer that a tariff can affect this matter. A scientific tariff means really a tariff arrived at from a judicious computation of conflicting interests. I do not think that would do any good in this case.

Perhaps the House would now like me to turn to the question of the policy of the Government. We are opening a discussion which is no abstract economic discussion. In some ways it is only secondarily an economic discussion at all. We are face to face with a political situation, and it is of great importance that we should have that clearly examined. The Prime Minister, speaking at Bristol, said—

"Did anybody ever hear of a Cabinet which was not merely agreed upon a policy but was also agreed upon every principle upon which that policy was supposed to depend and upon every conclusion to which those principles might be pressed?"

I cannot find the Cabinet are agreed upon any policy which deserves to be so called in any better sense than tactics of Party managers and Party wire-pullers. They are the tactics of make-believe—make-believe that a Party which is divided is not divided. You cannot call these tactics a policy. You take great care that even as a make-believe you do your best to prevent anybody being taken in by it. The Prime Minister said it was—

"Most unreasonable to come forward and taunt us because my colleagues who are agreed upon a policy do not pretend that they are agreed upon every conceivable development of that policy which that policy might under given circumstances take."

What is curious is that all the eloquence and all the energy is given to the "conceivable development." I would now ask the House to consider this agreement upon policy in the light of two or three utterances of important Gentlemen opposite, and I will begin, as indeed I ought, with the President of the Board of Trade. Speaking in October last, the President of the Board of Trade used this language—

"For the present, at all events, he did not consider it would be in the interest of the Party or of the policy they were recommending to include in the official programme (there were, it appears, two programmes) of the Government, a preference carrying as it did with it taxation of food."

That is the President of the Board of Trade. But then there is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade. He uses somewhat different language. He says he really believes that a trade preference to the Colonies is an essential part and would be an inevitable result of any change in our fiscal policy. He sympathised with Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. The President of the Board of Trade said one thing and his Parliamentary Secretary said quite the opposite. Then we come to the Postmaster-General, who said that with Mr. Chamberlain's scheme of preferential tariffs he could not agree. Then the noble Lord the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs made some very remarkable declarations indeed as a member of a Government which has quite agreed on its policy. He individually believed in Mr. Chamberlain's corn taxation proposals, and he said unhesitatingly that he believed it would be to the advantage of the country to adopt them. He frankly confessed that he did not think they would really benefit the agricultural industry at home. "For all his objects"—let the House notice this—let hon. Gentlemen opposite who are thinking how they will vote on this Amendment mark this—"for all his objects Mr. Chamberlain carries with him the hearty approval of his colleagues in the Government he has left."

*EARL PERCY: Objects, not methods.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I invite the noble Lord in the course of this debate to draw a distinction between his sympathy with the objects of the Member for Birmingham and his disapproval of his methods. Then there is the President of the Local Government Board. I scanned his utterance very closely because he had taken the very striking step of going down to a constituency represented by a Conservative colleague and doing his best to turn that Conservative colleague out. He said it was not an inconsistent declaration for him also to say that while with his present information he was against the taxation of food—what is his present information? I wonder what information he does want?—while his present information is against the taxation of food, he could conceive the arrival of a time when Mr. Chamberlain's policy would be satisfactorily developed and the proper system discovered by which it could be applied.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): Is that not an extract from the speech of a Gentleman who had spoken before me and which I used as a quotation.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I gave the right hon. Member my most studious attention, and I can assure the right hon. Gentleman I think not. Is a satisfactory development a development that ends in the taxation of the people? Then there is the Colonial Secretary, who went down to Leamington and recalled graceful reminiscences of Carlyle and Ruskin, and how they had overcome what he called the gloomy *doctrinaires* from Manchester. The gloomy *doctrinaires* of Manchester made short work of the sentimental idealist from Leamington. Does the right hon. Gentleman forget that if the Corn Laws and the whole policy of protection had two men more thoroughly opposed to them than Carlyle and Ruskin. I should be very much surprised? Carlyle's most saturnine, caustic, and picturesque descriptions are directed against the Corn Laws and against the Party of the kind of gentlemen who are now wanting to bring the Corn Laws back. The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head as if he did not want to bring the Corn Laws back. The right hon. Gentleman said he thought the ends of the right hon. Member for Birmingham were right and good ends, and he accepted as the expositor of those ends Mr. Charles Booth. Mr. Charles Booth is a protectionist. [No.] Is he not for a 5 per cent. duty? The right hon. Gentleman ought not to deny it.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON Warwick and Leamington): Deny what?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: That you are a protectionist. To finish the extracts, I think they are most pithily summed up by the Secretary for the Local Government Board as follows—

> "Some people said that Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain were in opposition. Others said that their policy was the same. He submitted that the true case was this—that Mr. Chamberlain was weaving a second string of the Government bow lest the negotiation string should snap before its work was done."

When these are the responsible governors of the country can you wonder that Consols are down to eighty-seven? I leave this part of the business with a quotation which expresses my view better than I can express it from the right hon. Member for Birmingham in a speech made in 1885—

> "I will say that Lord Salisbury does intend'

—and here I think he was unjust to Lord Salisbury—

> "to put a duty upon corn, though he does not think it convenient at the present moment to say so, and although he allows some members of his Government to argue in favour of it in one place, he enjoins upon other members of his Government to repudiate it in another. Remember, this is not a question upon which the Government can be allowed to have two voices. If you are going to tax the bread of the people you will affect every household in the land; you will throw back the working classes of the country to the starvation wages and the destitution from which Mr. Gladstone and Sir Robert Peel have relieved them."

What is meant by retaliation? The word "retaliation" is used, I observe, by many gentlemen as a sort of formula by which they can escape the labour of a close examination of what the issue really is. Last summer, in this House the Prime Minister said—

> "If other methods fail I do not shrink from retaliation, but I am not certain that there are not other methods."

I suppose he meant by "other methods" diplomatic negotiations of the ordinary sort. A case was brought to my notice the other day arising out of the reciprocity treaty between the United States and Cuba. Liverpool, Manchester, and, I think, the London

Chambers of Commerce carried on a correspondence and had an interview with Lord Lansdowne, representing to him that the arrangements under that treaty would be extremely prejudicial and would in fact practically close the door to British manufacturers in Cuba. I wonder what "other methods" the Prime Minister would apply to a case of that kind? But now let us suppose a real case of outrageous unfairness perpetrated against us by a foreign Government. I am myself unable to find evidence of there having been any outrageous case of unfairness. [Cries of "Oh!"] I know some hon. Gentlemen regard a high tariff as an act of outrageous unfairness, but that is not what the Prime Minister means. If there be a case of outrageous unfairness the Minister of the day has only to satisfy this House of three conditions, and I am perfectly sure this House, whichever Party be in the majority, would support the Minister. What are the three conditions? The first is that the Minister would have to satisfy the House and make good the case on the facts, that outrageous unfairness had been or was being perpetrated; secondly, he would have to show that he had got a plan for reprisal that would effectually stop it; and, thirdly, he would have to persuade this House that his plan of reprisal not only was likely to effect the special object he had in view, but was not likely to do a great deal more harm in another way. If those conditions were satisfied, I do not think there would be any difficulty in carrying through this House whatever retaliatory powers were necessary. But do you mean power to impose a retaliatory duty independent of, outside of, and beyond Parliament? The Emperor of the French, in 1860, was able to carry the Cobden treaty with this country, though his two Chambers were both of them strongly and stoutly opposed to anything like free trade, because, happily for him and for us, there was a clause in the Imperial Constitution which allowed the Emperor to make a tariff binding if it was part of a treaty Is that what you want? Do you want to be put in the position of the French Emperor? It is extravagant and absurd, the notion of any Minister having the power with his two Chambers both opposed to him, by decree to set up a tariff. I was much interested in another plan set out in a candid and well-argued book called "The Tariff Problem," by Professor Ashley of Birmingham University. What is his idea? He says—

> "What seems dictated by the requirements of the case is a statutory authorisation of the Executive to impose the duties that may be required from time to time as circumstances arise. It will not be safe to wait until the need arises before appealing to Parliament, for the mischief is of a kind that can be accomplished in a very brief period."

Does the House really apprehend what is proposed by this excellent writer, who lives very near the centre of authority, very near to Mecca? To carry out the policy, in order to secure an economic revolution, it is proposed to make the most astounding political revolution in our history since the time of the Civil War. The writer supposes cases so urgent that you cannot wait from August or September, when Parliament rises, till January, when it reassembles. I cannot for my part realise any of those cases. What sort of powers of negotiation do you want? Let us suppose that the Steel Trust of the United States announced, projected, and carried out the landing of an enormous stock of their goods at a low price upon our shores. What are you going to do? I suppose Lord Lansdowne would invite the very distinguished man who represents the United States in this country to an interview with him at the Foreign Office. Lord Lansdowne would say to Mr. Choate, "Unless your Government put a stop to a certain set of traders sending us billets and blooms so cheaply we will impose a duty, or even prohibition as well, so as to close our markets to you."

Mr. Choate, however, has a very easy reply to Lord Lansdowne. He would say, "How can the American Government prevent a commercial company from selling so cheaply to British markets?"

Then supposing statutory authorisation were obtained, and suppose Mr. Secretary Hay said of Mr. Choate, "Are we to instruct him to come to you, who are so famous for selling cheap all over the world, and to say, 'if you do not give up selling cheap we will exclude you from the United States market.'" [MINSTERIAL cries of "They would do it."] You have only to come to close quarters with the subject to see how absurd it is.

There is tremendous suffering at this moment in Lancashire. It is not due to the Americans selling goods too cheap, but to the making of cotton too dear. What are hon. Gentlemen who suppose that by some formula you are going to remedy all the evils of the commercial system going to do about cotton? Are you to request the President of the United States to get Congress to pass an Act to prevent gambling in cotton? The idea is absurd. Then it is said that you want something to bargain with. This is the process I think that the Prime Minister has in his mind. But how do you start? Are you to set up a general or all-round tariff, to build up a general Customs wall with the view of frightening the foreigner into lowering the general level of his adverse tariff? The Prime Minister said in his Sheffield speech that he did not intend to set up a general tariff. What the Government is going to do is to set up a combative tariff, to start with a heavy duty on all manufactured imports. The Prime Minister is against that because he thinks it would be a disturbance of the existing practice, and would lead to the disorganisation of trade; therefore he abandons the general tariff. What does he say next? For a man so clear of speech, when he likes, this is the most nebulous declaration I remember to have seen from a man in a great station. He sees the objection to the combative tariff, but says—

> "I see no such objection to our proceeding, so to speak, from the other end; and if we thought we could do so without disadvantage to ourselves, we might inform any foreign country that we thought they were treating us with such outrageous unfairness that, unless they modified their policy to our advantage, we should feel ourselves compelled to take this or that step in regard to their exports."

I call that nebulous. I want to know what steps? When the Prime Minister announces a revolution in policy surely we have a right to expect that he should tell us what he intends to do, what "this or that step" is going to be. We have a right to ask also what is his "method" of settlement with a foreign negotiator. [Cries of "Speak up."] I suppose it would mean a threat to say to Russia to this effect, "Unless you reduce your general tariff we will impose an adverse discriminating duty on your wheat and hemp and other products," having free trade with the rest of the world. I do not know how that will work or what the effect would be on the corn market; but what is to prevent Russia from sending her grain through Holland and reaching us in that way? In the Napoleonic wars English goods got into the Continent despite all hindrances, and therefore we wish to know accurately what "step" it is that the right hon. Gentleman means.

There is another vital question I wish to put. Is this change to be a permanent or a temporary tariff? After all, that is the great issue. Do you want to put on duties to bargain with and after making your bargain and frightening the foreigner into lowering his tariff are you going to take them off again? Are you going to dismantle your fiscal batteries and to shut up your Customs house? I will not argue the point or dwell upon its prospect of success, but I think it will create a frightful dislocation of trade as well as embarrassing your Budget from year to year unless you know what all these extraordinary operations are to be. This is an urgently important point with regard to the political situation, because this policy of a temporary dealing with the tariff is absolutely inconsistent with the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. You do not believe in a permanent tariff; but he does. He wants a scientific protective tariff; but you do not tell us what it is you mean. The right hon. Gentleman appeals to the protective policy of the United States, of France, and of Germany, and he recites how they passed tariff after tariff. It was not a haphazard policy; it was a deliberate policy to use tariffs to increase home trade and, if you like, to exclude foreign trade. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham says these foreigners are not fools, and he winds up by asking about this foreign policy. "Has it succeeded? It has succeeded." Those who consider that they are not voting for a protective policy when supporting with cheers and enthusiasm the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham cannot have read his utterances. Now what is your attitude towards these proposals? What, however, was the Government attitude? The Prime

Minister's language is obscure and ambiguous; still he leaves room for some expectation that he is not committed to protection. But his language is one thing and his action is another. When a candidate stands for Norwich the Prime Minister sends down his blessing with the watchword "Union and fiscal reform." This gentleman at Norwich was a complete fiscal reformer in its extreme length; and that has been the attitude of the Prime Minister ever since the controversy arose. The great difficulty is to know whether you are men in masks or whether you are straightforwardly telling the country and the House what it is you want.

Now is the moment for hon. Gentlemen to make up their minds and for every individual Member to ask himself whether he is for protection or whether he is against it. It is in the highest degree distasteful to me to place any difficulties by the form in which I venture to put this question to the House in the way of hon. Gentlemen who, to their great honour and to the credit of English public life, have made the greatest sacrifices that any public men can possibly make. I think the case was worth the sacrifice. I do not believe there has ever been a more irresistible demand upon all of us for manliness, frankness, and moral courage; and I hope these hon. Gentlemen will not flinch from the views they have advocated with all the strength of their experience and responsibility. Let them ask themselves this question, "Am I going to vote for confidence in a protectionist Government or for confidence in an anti-protectionist Government." They will shirk the prime duty of political life at this moment if they are not satisfied on this point, and guided by the answer they give to themselves when they go into the Lobby. I, for my part, am not at all careful as to the numbers in the division when the division is taken. After all, what is important is this—What will be the result of that far greater division in the country when it takes place? I will not venture to predict, but I shall be very much surprised if the constituencies, when the time comes, express confidence in the Government at a time like this, when we have just barely emerged from the financial confusion and embarrassment caused by the late war, and when we are face to face with events threatening, or, I am afraid, I must say, events now happening, which, beyond almost any set of circumstances which have arisen in our recent history, impose the necessity on Great Britain, at all events, of keeping her powder dry, and of keeping her resources in steadfast charge. I say that if the country gives its confidence to any Government at a moment so grave as this, it will not be to a Government which, upon the plea of an emergency which does not really exist, and on behalf of a thing called fiscal reform which they cannot—I know they cannot—explain or define, are ready to plunge the country into confusion, and to pave the way to ultimate disaster.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words—

"But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House, that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentmet, and well being."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): It is a matter much to be regretted that the Leader of the Opposition did not see his way to accept the offer of the Home Secretary of facilities for carrying on this debate at a time when the Prime Minister would have been able to be in his place—all the more so as unfortunately we are also deprived of the presence of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham in connection with circumstances to which the right hon. Gentleman has made allusion in feeling and appropriate language. I cannot help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman himself shares this regret, notwithstanding the somewhat hollow, if he will allow me to use the word, explanation which he gave both the other day and again to-day in defence of the course which has been adopted. The right hon. Gentleman tells us that discussion in the House of Commons on this subject has been so long delayed that the impatience of the public would brook no further postponement. I do not at all agree with him. I believe that the public would receive with perfect equanimity the postponement of this debate for two or three weeks in order that the Prime Minister might be present in his place. I must say I think it is permissible, at all events, to suspect that there was some other motive besides that which the right hon. Gentleman has stated to account for the course now taken. We all know that this Amendment is carefully designed with a view to capturing what I may call the extreme right wing of the Unionist Party —a perfectly natural object. Hon. gentlemen opposite think that they have got the Party which goes by the name of the Free Food Unionists in a difficulty [Cries of "No" and "The Government"]. In this carefully framed Amendment they have devised a net for these Gentlemen, and they are unwilling to abandon such a monument of ingenuity. Whether they will be successful in capturing my hon. friends or not I am, of course, unable to say, but I shall be surprised if they do not find, before this debate has come to a conclusion, that they have somewhat overreached themselves, and that the course they have taken, the somewhat paltry manœuvre which they have adopted, will have defeated its own object.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman describe a little more fully what the paltry manœuvre is?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I did not wish to convey any offence in using that phrase, but by paltry manœuvre I meant a manœuvre intended to make it difficult for the extreme right wing of the Party to avoid voting for the Amendment and against the Government.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Does the right hon. Gentleman contend that it is a paltry manœuvre to introduce such an Amendment as this on the Address? [Cries of "Withdraw."]

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am quite prepared to withdraw the words if they give offence, but what I was referring to was not the bringing forward of an Amendment of this character on the Address, which, of course, is a perfectly natural and proper thing to do, but the insisting on taking the discussion at a time when my right hon. friend the Prime Minister is necessarily absent although they might have taken it at another time.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Could it have been amended if it had come in another form?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It might have been amended. With regard to the Amendment itself, I hardly know whether it is directed against the policy of the Government or against the policy of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham. With the exception of the first sentence, there is nothing in the Amendment to which those Gentlemen who accept the policy announced at Sheffield but decline to go further could not subscribe to. I will go so far as to say that, with one exception, there is very little in the body of the Amendment to which I myself should object. But there is a strange preamble attached to this Amendment—

> "But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers."

I listened with some attention to discover what it was the right hon. Gentleman intended to convey by those words. How can our discussions on the financial service of the year be impaired by differences of opinion between His Majesty's Ministers in respect of a question which is not now before the House as a practical policy? What bearing can these conflicting opinions possibly have upon the financial service of the year? The right hon. Gentleman says we must know whether we have a protectionist or an anti-protectionist Government to deal with. Well, I say in the most unhesitating manner that the policy of the Government is not protectionist. At a later period of his speech the right hon. Gentleman again returned to this question of the conflicting statements of Ministers, and he read out a series of extracts from speeches by myself and by hon. and right hon. friends of mine to show what? To show that outside the official policy of the Government—I am not ashamed of the phrase—there are great differences of opinion among Gentlemen who sit on this Bench. What is there reprehensible in that? Surely outside the policy which the Government has deliberately adopted and included in its programme any amount of difference of opinion may be allowed. Throughout the course of British history you have had differences of opinion outside the immediate policy of the Government. I really cannot understand what it is that the right hon. Gentleman objects to when he says that, in consequence of these differences of opinion, it is impossible for us to adequately discuss the financial service of the year. It is possible that the right hon. Gentleman may have had something rather different in his mind from the mere conflict of opinion between Ministers in a matter which is quite outside the policy of the Government. He has on other occasions been very eloquent in denouncing the Prime Minister for his opportunism in the question of fiscal reform for having one policy for the Government, and at the same time holding an opinion which went beyond that policy. No doubt it is perfectly true that many of the colleagues of the Prime Minister also sympathise with a fiscal policy which goes beyond the policy officially accepted. I quite admit it. But is that an uncommon circumstance in our political life? Surely hon. Gentlemen opposite must be aware that there are many subjects on which they themselves are not wholly agreed. What of disestablishment? We know perfectly well that many right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite strongly hold that the Church should be disestablished. Are they therefore bound, is there any obligation on them, to include that in their programme? What of Home Rule itself? Is Home Rule at the present moment part of the programme of the Liberal Party? Is it not true that in the minds of at least some hon. Gentlemen opposite Home Rule has been rapidly degenerating into something like a pious opinion, and if they are entitled to hold pious opinions are not we also? There is an even stronger case than Home Rule. The noble Lord who was the latest Prime Minister of the Liberal Party has taken upon himself to sweep the whole of the Newcastle programme off the board. Is the Newcastle programme part of the programme of the Liberal Party or is it not? Surely these are all cases in which matters of very great moment and importance are held to be, by important members of the Opposition, outside the policy of the Party. It is exactly the same with us. The policy of preference which has been advocated by my right hon. friend the Member for Birmingham has the sympathy of a great many members of the Government, but it is not included in the policy of the Government, and I cannot see what there is reprehensible in having an official policy and holding an opinion which goes somewhat beyond it.

Mr. Gerald Balfour.

The right hon. Gentleman asks, Where is the urgency? So far as the colonial policy is concerned, the urgency arose when the Colonies offered us a preference. [OPPOSITION cries of "When?"] That occurred two years ago at the Conference of the Colonial Premiers. The urgency arose when the Colonies offered us a preference, and when it was made perfectly clear that they at least hoped that they would enjoy some preference in return. But it is not merely the question of preference that was urgent. The question of retaliation also became urgent the moment an important country on the Continent intimated to us that if this policy of preference were persisted in, not only our Colonies, but even the Mother Country might be deprived of the most favoured-nation treatment. There was the further urgency arising from this, that many Continental countries were already constructing new *tarifs de combat*, and if we were not in a position to bear our part in the discussions preliminary to the framing of new commercial treaties, our interests undoubtedly would have to go to the wall. Those were the causes which made this matter urgent; but I quite grant this to the right hon. Gentleman—that unless matters had been ripe in the country for a policy of this sort, the incidents to which I have referred might not have been sufficient to raise the question in all the fulness which has been given to it. For a long time past I believe this question has been ripening in the minds of the people—not perhaps the policy of preference, that is of course of comparatively late date, and has its origin in the action of the Colonies; but as far as a free hand for negotiation, as far as what is called a policy of retaliation is concerned, that has been silently growing in favour for a long time past. The Prime Minister has stated that twenty years ago he expressed his opinion strongly in favour of what is now called the policy of retaliation. My own belief is that it will be found on looking at the speeches delivered by many of my hon. friends about the same time that they also expressed similar views. I did so myself, and I have never changed my opinion, that in itself the power of retaliation was a desirable power for this country to possess. Therefore, when the suggestion of fiscal reform was started by my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham and by the Prime Minister, the response of the country itself forced the question forward and made it a practical question. We could not then have set it aside, even if we had desired, but we did not desire because, as I said, many of us had long been converts to the view which regards retaliation as a policy in itself desirable, if the country was prepared to accept it.

The right hon. Gentleman referred to a speech I made at Leeds. I am quite willing to agree that it was a very apt quotation from his point of view. He asks me whether I have changed my opinion since then. Well, if I had modified my opinion in the light of a further study of this question I certainly should not be ashamed to acknowledge it. It is true that I have modified my opinions to this extent, that I do now attach greater importance to, I regard as of graver effect, certain tendencies which analysis reveals in British industry and commerce. I do think that to some of the signs to which I now attach importance I did not attach quite sufficient importance when I made that statement. In other respects I do not withdraw a word of the quotation which the right hon. Gentleman has read to the House. I do not think the ruin of the trade and industry of this country is impending. I do not see how it is possible to affirm that we are on the brink of ruin if you examine the facts and figures. But that is not in itself a reason against fiscal reform. We must look at tendencies, and if we see that those tendencies are drifting us in a dangerous direction it is our duty to take precautions against such a result. I agree that there has been probably a certain exaggeration of statement with respect to the present condition of our trade. [OPPOSITION cries of "By whom?"] But has the exaggeration been all on one side? From the way many hon. Gentlemen talk you would think that the whole prosperity of this country rested upon free imports. [OPPOSITION cries of "Hear, hear!"] Some hon. Gentlemen say that is so. Anybody who has given study to this subject knows perfectly well that though free imports may have been an important element in the amazing growth of prosperity in this country during the last fifty years, they are only one element. I should say myself that the progress of invention, the cheapening of freights, and the large extension of the area under wheat in the United States are all three of them causes which have contributed more to the general prosperity and well-being of the country than the particular fiscal policy which we have followed. This prosperity, undeniable and great as it is, is shared by other countries also which have not adopted our fiscal policy, and I think that ought to be borne in mind by those hon. Gentlemen who a minute ago cheered the suggestion that our whole prosperity must be due to the free trade policy of the country.

The right hon. Gentleman referred to the inquiry undertaken by the Government. It is curious how very many different estimates have been formed of the value of that inquiry. The right hon. Gentleman quoted from the Duke of Devonshire to the effect that this inquiry was a deception, and if I remember rightly the Duke of Devonshire also described the Blue-book which embodied the results of the inquiry as an ill-digested collection of statistics. On the other hand, Lord Rosebery spoke of it as "the exhaustive investigation of the Board of Trade," and hon. Gentlemen opposite have certainly in their speeches in the country not spoken of the Blue-book as if it represented a mere illusory investigation. I should just like to say a word as to the way in which the Blue-book was framed. The basis of the inquiry was laid by questions set by Ministers to the Board of Trade. We answered these questions to the best of our ability, and, so far as the inquiries remained obviously incomplete, the Board of Trade officials, in connection with myself, did their best to fill up the gaps. It is quite true that the Blue-book is a quarry from which both sides can extract material, and from which both sides have extracted material; but it can hardly be brought against it as a reproach that it is sufficiently impartial to supply materials to both sides. This is a most complicated question. There is a great deal to be said on both sides, and if the Blue-book which embodied the result of the inquiry had not been a quarry in which both sides could mine with effect, it would certainly not have fulfilled the object for which it was designed. The right hon. Gentleman opposite pressed us to give a more definite statement as to the procedure and the machinery by which we propose to carry out our views. I am bound to say that the request is not altogether a reasonable one. On one point, however, I can satisfy the curiosity of the right hon. Gentleman. He asked us whether we proposed that the Executive should have the power of imposing retaliatory duties without the consent of Parliament. No, Sir. That has never been contemplated by us. We have never suggested or proposed that Parliament should be invited to divest itself of its power of control over taxation, or that it should transfer to the Executive or the Privy Council the power to impose taxes.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Does the right hon. Gentleman mean that the authority of Parliament will be required in each particular case, or that a general statute may be passed giving general powers to be applied at the discretion of the Executive Government in any particular case?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: In our view no tax could be imposed unless the consent of Parliament had been obtained. [AN HON. MEMBER: In each case?] That is asking rather too much. I do not think it is fair to claim beforehand that we should go so far into detail as to pledge ourselves that the consent of Parliament shall be required item by item. I do not think we should be asked to go into further detail. Hon. Gentlemen opposite complain of that, but it would be impossible to go further into this matter without going into every detail of the plan by which retaliation would be carried out; and that I decline to do, and, I think, reasonably decline. All precedent in this matter is on our side, but I will refer to only one which is really a classical precedent, and it has determined, in my judgment, for all time, what is and what is not obligatory on a Government in the way of disclosing details of a policy beforehand. I refer to Mr. Gladstone's action in connection with the Home Rule Bill. Let us consider what the circumstances were. In 1886 Mr. Gladstone's Bill was thrown out on the question of the position of the Irish Members in relation to this House. Everybody knew that that was the crucial question in connection with Home Rule. Mr. Gladstone had no second opportunity of bringing in a Home Rule Bill until seven years had passed. Everybody knew that there were only three possible courses open. One was known as the "all out" policy adopted in the Bill of 1886, another was the "all in" policy, and the third was the "in and out" policy. Again and again Mr. Gladstone was pressed by the Unionist Party to disclose his intention in regard to this crucial point, and he always refused. Now, Sir, I say you could not imagine a case in which there would be a stronger claim for the disclosure of the details of a policy before an appeal was made to the country, yet Mr. Gladstone never consented to reveal the details of his policy.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis.): Is that a precedent the Government are going to follow?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: My hon. friend asks whether that is a precedent which the Government are going to follow. I say that precedent determined for all time what can legitimately be refused, so far as such a point can be determined by precedents.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, and I really think that after all he has said of Mr. Gladstone's action when in opposition I am entitled to press him—the right hon. Gentleman tells us the Government are going to take a certain general line of action. We ask him very innocently, and that is what I want to know, whether Parliament is to be informed before or after this action has been taken? Surely that is a vital question.

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: My reply to that is that we ought not to be pressed before an appeal to the electors is made to lay before the country all the details of our plan, and I appeal to the example of Mr. Gladstone, and I say it is conclusive on that point. Mr. Gladstone was placing a great policy before the country, and we are placing our policy before the country.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman has volunteered to tell us the manner and method by which this policy is to be applied. [HON. MEMBERS: No.] Yes, he is engaged in doing it, and we ask him one or two questions across the Table which are absolutely essential. He is speaking for the Government. He is not in opposition. He is not announcing a programme to the country. He talks about the electors. We know nothing about the electors.

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I cannot see that that has anything to do with the matter. Mr. Gladstone had a policy to put before the country. We have a policy to put before the country. He refused to go into details, and we are entitled to follow his example. But if hon. Members are really anxious to press this matter any further, all I can say is that it is a pity they should not have waited until such time as the Prime Minister could be here. At all events, I and my colleagues on this Bench must decline, and, in my judgment, properly decline, to go either behind or beyond the policy as laid down by the Prime Minister.

I should think a greater compliment has hardly ever been paid to a statesman in this country than the concentration of attention which has been bestowed on the policy of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham. It is not the policy of the Government. Everyone knew that if an appeal were made to the electors and a majority were returned in favour of the Government policy, that would not entitle us to go further and carry out the policy of preference. Notwithstanding all that, here you have nineteen-twentieths of the flood of oratory poured forth in the recess directed to the policy of my right hon. friend.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): You have Conservative Members opposed by Cabinet Ministers.

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I say that is an extraordinary testimony to the force of character and energy and ability of my right hon. friend. But I think there may have been other causes at work. In the first place it is a policy much more easy to attack than that of the Government. The proposal to tax food is not *prima facie* likely to be a popular policy. Whereas the policy of retaliation is one, you may almost say, which is natural to any Englishman. Then again, my right hon. friend has done what we have declined to do. He has given a somewhat detailed account of his proposal, and a detailed account of a proposal is to an eager Opposition like a pot of honey to flies in summer. You have only to look at the treatment which my right hon. friend's scheme has received in order to judge of the wisdom of a premature disclosure of details. Then I think it is also possible that my right hon. friend's policy, rather than that of the Government, has been accentuated in Opposition speeches, because hon. Members opposite think that by so doing they may succeed in detaching from the main body of the Unionists those who doubt whether to carry this fiscal reform so far as my right hon. friend proposes to carry it is wise in the best interests of the country. Whether the line taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite has really been prudent, in the interest of the cause which they champion, I am somewhat inclined to doubt. The effect of the course they have pursued has been to give the utmost possible advertisement to the policy of my right hon. friend. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Fife says that was the last thing that was needed. I quite agree that any policy taken up and propounded by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham is certain to attract the attention of the country without any adventitious aid, but I think that in his exertions he has been greatly assisted by the activity and energy of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Besides, it has had another effect, for in their hot haste to blacken the policy of my hon. friend the policy of the Government has been made to shine quite bright by comparison. Hon. Members opposite laugh at that, but let me quote a passage of the speech delivered by the Duke of Devonshire last month—

> "All that I have to add to what I said on another occasion is that while I do not believe so firmly as the Prime Minister does in the probable efficacy of such a policy, I am more disposed than I was to approve of the object of that policy. I do so because it was a policy not only differing from, but absolutely opposed to, the more dangerous and more mischievous policy of Mr. Chamberlain."

[Cries of "Do you agree?"] Then the heart of the hon. Member for Oldham warmed so much to the Government policy in his frenzied opposition to the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham that he actually went the length of saying that the policy of the Government was interesting but not very important.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): Hear, hear!

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I think there is a certain humour in the phrase of my hon. friend applied to what the Prime Minister described as a reversal of the fiscal traditions of this country. How far has my hon. friend travelled, even since last session when he opposed, tooth and nail, the Sugar Convention, which proposed in a modest way and in an isolated case the principle for which we now ask general approval.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I said the policy of the Prime Minister was not very important because it was not the issue before the country.

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I beg leave to differ from the hon. Gentleman. It is the policy before the country. I think the real explanation of the language of my hon. friend is, that he, like others, can see nothing in fiscal reform except protection. Protection occupies the entire field of his vision, and my hon. friend is not alone in this because there seems to be something like an organised conspiracy to represent the issue before the country as an issue between free trade and protection. I absolutely deny that. I quite admit there is a natural temptation so to represent it. The old proverb, "Give a dog a bad name and hang him," has no doubt a good deal in it. If you can not only give your adversary a bad name, but retain a good one for yourself, double advantage is secured. But this way of presenting the issue is absolutely superficial and misleading. Let us look more closely at the various classes of opinion respecting this fiscal question existing in the country and this House at the present time. There are, at least, four such classes. First you have the free importers; next, those who approve the Government policy, who ask for a free hand to negotiate, and, if necessary, to retaliate; thirdly, there are those who follow the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and who favour preferential arrangements with the Colonies; and, lastly, there are the protectionists. Anyone who is a protectionist will probably also be in favour of preference and of a free hand in negotiation: but the reverse by no means follows. There are many who are in favour of a free hand in negotiation who do not advocate preference, and others who advocate preference, but are by no means protectionists. The various distinctions have been so loosely appreciated in discussions on the platform that it is advisable to endeavour to define a little more precisely the essential characteristic of each class of opinion.

The free importers are free traders in intention, but not in reality. Free trade in its essence is bilateral. The characteristic mark of the free importer is not free trade. It is the refusal to adopt any other method than that of moral suasion in order to bring about free trade. They are the Quakers of finance. Their policy is a purely negative policy; they are the peace-at-any-price party in relation to industrial affairs. When Sir Robert Peel stated that in his view the best way of fighting tariffs was by free imports, he uttered a maxim which was no doubt a maxim of expediency at the time at which he spoke; but that maxim was subsequently converted into a fundamental principle of English finance, that no taxation should be put on except for revenue purposes; and the principle itself became in turn something like a dogma, under no circumstances to be set aside or modified. You cannot hold that dogma and at the same time be in favour of freedom of negotiation; you cannot hold it to be final and unconditional and yet advocate preferential policy. *A fortiori* it is not possible to hold it and be a protectionist.

Let me pass to the fiscal reformers, and first of all to the protectionists. When I speak of protection I refer to the system existing at the present time in the United States of America, France, Germany, and other continental countries. What is protection? Protection is a system of artificial assistance deliberately accorded to particular industries by the State, generally by means of import duties, in order to give these industries advantages over and above what they would enjoy under conditions of natural competition. That is my definition of protection, and in order to illustrate it I should like to refer to what are called countervailing duties. Countervailing duties are duties imposed as a counterpoise to a bounty. They have to be most carefully discriminated from protective duties. They are really duties imposed in self defence. There is an ambiguity in the word "protection," and it would be greatly in the interests of clear discussion if, when we are speaking of protection to industry by a duty which is in the nature of a countervailing duty, we were to call it not protection but defence. There is a distinction between defensive duties and protection. Defensive duties are in my opinion perfectly legitimate even as part of the theory of free trade. Protective duties stand in a different category.

We have been challenged to-night to say whether the policy of the Government is protectionist or anti-protectionist. I have already stated, I hope in clear language, that the policy of the Government is not protectionist. If I am asked, not as a member of the Government but as an individual—the distinction is perfectly legitimate—what my own view of protection is, I am perfectly willing to state it. I do not think that protection is a wise policy for this country to adopt. I do not wish to make any absolute statement of faith with regard to protection in other countries. The effect of protection is, practically, to impose a tax on the consumer for the benefit of the producer. If the extra profits resulting from protection, or part of such profits, are employed, as may easily happen, to further the development of industrial enterprise, it is possible—I believe in some instances it is actually the case—that a policy of protection may really stimulate industrial development. I think protection has probably stimulated industrial development in Germany and also in the United States. Therefore I should be extremely reluctant to say that either Germany or the United States had adopted a policy which was wrong for these countries. On the contrary. I think very likely it was right for Germany and the United States. But for our country —which had such an immense start over all others, which was a highly developed manufacturing country at a time when such a description could not be applied to any other country—protection for such a country is, I believe, a bad policy, and I should be sorry to see a return to it now. I will even go so far as this—that if it was a choice between protection as we know it in Germany and America, and other countries and the existing system, I should be on the side of free imports. But, as a matter of fact, nothing of the kind is the case. It is possible to hold the views which I have just expressed and yet be a warm advocate of preferential arrangements with the Colonies. The object of preference is twofold. First, to draw closer the commercial relations between the mother country and the Colonies, and to make the exchange of commodities between them freer. That is the economic object. There is also a political object, namely, to draw closer the political tie between the mother country and the other parts of the Empire. What is there in these aims which has anything to do with the establishment of a protective system in this country? There is absolutely no necessary connection between the two things, unless indeed it be the circumstance that preference involves a small duty on certain foodstuffs, a duty which hon. Gentlemen opposite have repeatedly said in their speeches in the country would practically have no protective effect whatever. [OPPOSITION cries of "Who said it?"] I have seen it stated over and over again. Lord Rosebery is among those who have stated it in very clear and very emphatic language. But then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Mommouthshire says, "What about the average 10 per cent. tax upon manufactured goods?" If I am to answer that question as a member of the Government and on behalf of the Government, I say that as preference is not in our programme, *a fortiori* any particular method of carrying out preference is not in our programme.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): It is quite independent of preference.

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am glad o hear that admission, because it is exactly the point which I am trying to drive home. If in my individual capacity I am asked to say what my view on the subject is, why, then, I say at once I should be very glad to see a state of public opinion in this country which would admit of the adoption of the policy of preferential arrangements with our Colonies. But in saying that I absolutely decline to pin myself to any

particular method of carrying that policy out. I do not think my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham would say that this particular part of his plan is in his view absolutely essential to the policy preference. Why was this 10 per cent. adopted in the first instance by my right hon. friend as part of his scheme? It was because, in order to avoid the imposition of an additional burden on the working classes it was necessary to remit part of the duties on sugar and tea, and, therefore, to make good the deficiency resulting therefrom to the Exchequer. But that is purely a revenue question [Laughter.] Perhaps I have not made myself clear. It is admitted that the policy of preference cannot be carried out without a tax upon certain food imports from foreign countries. The suggestion of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham was that duties should be placed on corn and meat and dairy produce, and that they should be taken off tea, sugar, and coffee. As the result of that change in taxation would be to produce a deficit in the revenue, of course it would be necessary to make good this deficit it in some way or another; but the particular scheme by which my right hon. friend proposed to make good the deficit is not one which is essential to the policy of preference. For my part, speaking in my individual capacity, while I am in favour of the policy of preference, if the Colonies are able and willing satisfactorily to meet us, I am not equally bound to approve of the method of carrying it out which has been put forward and defended with such eloquence and ability by my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham. If protection is not necessarily implied in preference, still less is it implied in the policy of the Government. [Dissent.] Surely hon. Members have arrived at a more accurate conception of the policy of the Government than to suppose that it involves the taxation of food products.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to mean that his policy of retaliation will not take advantage of any duty on food in order to carry out retaliation?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I believe it has already been stated by the Prime Minister that his policy does not contemplate the taxation of food. [A UNIONIST MEMBER: Of raw material?] Of course not; for the objections to taxing raw material are more serious than the objections to taxing food. I said a moment ago that the policy of the Government was not inconsistent with free trade principles. I think I may go even further than that, and say that those who advocate the policy of the free hand for negotiation may fairly declare that they are truer friends of free trade than hon. Gentlemen opposite, who, while they praise free trade, are not prepared to make any sacrifices on behalf of it. They have a platonic love for free trade. They will not do anything for it. They will not fight for it. But we are prepared to fight for free trade, and to that extent I think we may claim to be truer friends of free trade than hon. Members opposite. The line we have taken is this, that the policy of peace at any price with respect to commercial and industrial matters ought to come to an end. We are met by two arguments. We are told that we have the power to retaliate already. We are also told that if we did possess this power it would be of no use to us. As to the first argument, we are told that we have only got to come to Parliament and ask in each case for certain powers, and to act upon the powers so given. I do not think that that is an accurate statement of the position. No doubt Parliament is omnipotent. Parliament could to-morrow reintroduce the system of protection. Parliament could, so far as theory goes, restore absolute monarchy in this country. But would anybody suggest that any Ministry would venture, in any single case, to impose for purposes of retaliation a duty which was incidentally of a protective character without having first got the general assent of the country to the change of policy which that involved? Hitherto we have observed the principle that taxation should not be put on except for revenue purposes, but if we are to have a free hand for negotiation we must abandon that principle, or regard it, at least, as a principle modifiable according to circumstances. Just imagine my noble friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, approaching a foreign Government under existing conditions, with a threat to impose this or that duty unless adequate concessions were made in favour of British interests. It would be out of question for any Minister of Foreign Affairs to do that unless he had the mandate of the country behind him, otherwise he would be making a threat which he would know perfectly well he would not have the power to carry out; and the negotiator, on the other side, would know it also, and would naturally say, "Your revolver is not loaded; you talk of putting on penal taxes, but we know that that is inconsistent with your general fiscal policy." Unless we have a mandate from the country behind us we never shall have the power to negotiate with real effect. Every Government in turn is constantly addressing appeals and warnings to foreign nations against some proposed action hostile to our interests. Those appeals are hardly ever effectual, and they never will be effectual unless the foreign country with whom we are remonstrating is aware that we have got the power of inflicting a penalty if our requests are not listened to. Then it is said, "It is all very well to talk about retaliation, but how are you going to retaliate against countries like Russia and the United States which send you raw material in a very much larger proportion than any other commodity?" Well, of course it would be more difficult for us to apply pressure to Russia and the United States than to some other countries which could be named. But really, the passion for uniformity of hon. Gentlemen opposite seems to me to amount almost to a mania. Because a preferential tariff might affect different colonies differently, therefore we are to have no preferential arrangements at all. And, similarly, because we are not in a position to apply as severe a pressure to the United States or Russia as we should be, say, to Germany and France, therefore we are not to attempt to apply pressure at all. Surely such an argument as that answers itself.

There is one other argument to which I would refer in this connection. It is perfectly true that we should find great difficulty—I fully appreciate it—in applying pressure to the United States; I believe that continental countries, which, as we all know, are equipped for retaliation, have not been successful in bringing pressure to bear on the United States. But they have successfully brought pressure to bear on other countries, though not on the United States. We have not merely to consider freedom of negotiation for the purpose of securing favourable commercial treaties, we have also got to defend our industries against illegitimate and unfair competition. One advantage secured by the Sugar Convention was that you had the representatives of all the principal commercial countries in Europe laying down the principle that high protective duties could under certain circumstances constitute a bounty. I believe that is absolutely true, and the whole system of modern dumping undoubtedly rests on the two factors—first, combination among the producers, and, secondly, the protection of a high tariff. Now, if we cannot induce the United States to lower their tariff, at least, it will be possible for us to provide against the kind of bounty which arises from the combination of producers operating from behind the shelter of a protection system. [AN HON. MEMBER: How?] It is possible to put on duties if necessary.

*LORD HUGH CECIL: On all goods of that class?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am not saying what we should do, but how it is possible—namely, by the imposition of a tax which would act as a countervailing duty, or even by the, in some way, more extreme measure of prohibition that we have taken in connection with the Sugar Convention.

*LORD HUGH CECIL: Do you mean on all goods of one class as was done in the case of sugar.

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am very sensible that it is impossible to cover so vast and complicated a subject as this is in a single speech. I have not entered elaborately into statistics on this occasion, for it is really only the policy of the Government with which I

have to deal. That that policy is directed against a real and serious evil no one attempts to deny, and if I were to go through all the figures in the Blue-book bearing on this part of the subject I should only be proving in detail what is already admitted on all sides. ["No."] The hon. Gentleman must really be a very strange free trader if he does not admit that the closing of the markets of foreign nations to the exports of this country is a serious evil. Hon. Gentlemen opposite are of opinion that our remedy would be ineffectual, if not mischievous. Well, we do not agree, and we mean to ask the country to let us try the experiment. ["When?"] Of course it would be far easier to sit down and do nothing. For my own Department in particular Fiscal Reform means a vast addition of toil, trouble and anxiety. But we advocate the policy because we are convinced that it is required in the best interests of the commerce and industry of the country. I myself think that it would have an even wider influence and effect. I believe that the knowledge that the British market is always open to the exports of foreign countries, no matter what fiscal policy foreign countries may adopt towards us, has contributed very materially to encourage foreign nations in erecting those really ridiculous tariff barriers against each other and against us; and I regard it as not only possible, but probable, that if this fiscal reform, which hon. Gentlemen opposite deplore as retrograde, is adopted, it will contribute to the establishment, not, indeed of universal or complete free trade, but at least of a freer exchange of commodities than now between the nations of the entire civilised world.

*MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) said the House had just listened to a very remarkable speech. It was extraordinary in the fact that the President of the Board of Trade had declared himself a free trader although he was sitting by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Local Government Board, both of whom had so loudly proclaimed their sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Before proceeding to comment upon that speech he wished to express his regret that the Prime Minister and the late

Colonial Secretary were not present during this debate and more particularly in regard to the cause which had led to their absence. The President of the Board of Trade commenced his speech by complaining that the Opposition had raised this debate on the Address. What were the facts of the case? Last year they were prevented from having a debate upon this question on a fair issue, because the Government were still in a state of uncertainty and had not declared their policy in any shape or form and they would only allow a debate on a vote of no confidence. Now when the policy of the Government had been declared they were challenging the protectionist views which had been promulgated by various members of the Government. The right hon. Gentlemen had imputed some paltry manœuvre to them and he said this Amendment had been designed to capture a wing of the Conservative Party. It appeared to him that if they had put down a Motion on another day they would not have been allowed to vote on this issue at all, because it would have been altered by some Amendment connived at by the Government, which would have obscured the issue. He felt some sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman in the somewhat weak defence he offered for the Government. The right hon. Gentleman said it was in accordance with precedent for some difference of opinion to be allowed to members of the Government. He himself did not think it was, when the real question they were considering was protection applied to the food of the people. No Government had any right to speak with two voices on a question of such vital importance to the people of the country. In regard to retaliation, the right hon. Gentleman had condescended to tell them that Parliament was to keep the power in its own hands of agreeing to or disagreeing from any proposals that were to be made. Surely Parliament had that power now, and he did not see what other power was wanted. When questioned further, the right hon. Gentleman said he could not say that Parliament was to have the power to deal with the matter item by item. He must say that at this moment he had not the faintest idea how the Government proposed to carry out the policy they announced. They were told that they ought to have waited for the Prime Minister. Were hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite such a set of weak, poor, miserable people that they could not do anything without the head of the Government? Did they not know what their policy was? If they did know, why did they not tell the House? Take the case of Russia and America, to which the right hon. Gentleman referred. The policy of the Government was that in cases of outrageous unfairness we were to be allowed to retaliate. What was generally understood by outrageous unfairness was when very high tariffs were put on the imported goods of countries like Russia and the United States. If it was difficult to deal with Russia and America, how were they going to deal with France and Germany and other countries with a less tariff? If they set up protectionist duties against France and Germany unless they agreed to our demand, and no tariff was set up against Russia and America, the position would be ridiculous. If that kind of thing was done it was perfectly certain that we were going to be landed in tariff wars, and he thought right hon. Gentlemen opposite had no idea what that meant to the trade and industry of this country. Where had retaliation been successful? What reason was there to suppose, from the history of recent tariff controversies, that retaliation would be successful?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Retaliation is only a *pis-aller*. There is no negotiation possible unless you have the power of retaliation behind it.

*MR. EMMOTT said he wanted to put this question: Sixty years ago, when this country had the power of retaliation, why was it given up? Why did Peel and Gladstone say they were going to fight protective duties by free imports? They said they adopted that course because they had found that, despite all the great tariff that they had, it was no use for purposes of negotiation.

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR pointed out that twenty years later Mr. Gladstone reversed that position by making the Cobden Treaty.

*Mr. EMMOTT said the Cobden Treaty was not in any sense directed against the principle of free trade. It made for free trade.

*Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Our object is to make for free trade also.

*Mr. EMMOTT admitted that, and went further than that. As a matter of principle, if retaliation had been successful in the past, if it was likely to be successful in the future, he fully admitted there was nothing against the principle of free trade in retaliation.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) asked if there had not been a recent successful case of retaliation between Canada and Germany? Had not Germany recently made concessions in favour of Canada because of Canada's retaliatory action? He would also like to ask the hon. Member—

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! This kind of question would be more properly put into a speech.

*Mr. EMMOTT said the question of Canada and Germany raised a very large point which he had not time to go into now. If Germany had carried out the implied threat of imposing extra duties against us because Canada had given our goods the preference, that was one of those cases which he would have thought was outrageous unfairness, and if there had been any means he would have gone to all lengths to stop it—any means without injuring ourselves. His constituents were vitally interested in these important matters. They were interested in two trades—the cotton trade and the textile machinery trade. In his constituency there were three men employed in the export trade for one employed in the home trade. They were told that "cotton would go, that sugar had gone, that silk had gone"—although he saw by a recent Government Return that in fifty years our exports had increased 33 per cent., whilst the exports of France had only increased by 16 per cent. It was far from his mind to say that everything was for the best in this country, and in the iron, wool, and cotton trades he admitted there were circumstances which required careful attention. But if there was reason for care and attention to these matters surely it was all the more necessary that no quack remedy should be applied. And when he was told by modern prophets that cotton would go he replied at once that cotton would go if they applied the quack remedy of protection. He saw some figures the other day which showed that to build a cotton mill of 100,000 spindles in this country cost £125,000, to build the same mill in Germany cost £185,000, in France £200,000, and in the United States £250,000. The principal reason for the difference between those figures was because here we had free trade and in all the other countries they had protection. The costs varied according to the degree of protection in those various countries. Take the case of Germany, where the cost was £60,000 more than here. The German must allow 5 per cent. for interest and 5 per cent. for depreciation. That was, he had got to make £6,000 a year more than the Englishman to get the same return, so the Englishman could afford to pay ten shillings a week more to his work-people and still make as large a profit. The practical result of free trade, had been that in any open market we had practically the predominance. In India, for example, for every 100 yards of cotton cloth ninety-eight was sent from this country. Therefore we had little to gain by protection. We had £70,000,000 or more of exports that we might lose if the cost of making those goods was made materially dearer.

It being half-past Seven of the Clock the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty as followeth—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,—*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question to add the words, 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment and well-being.'"—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. EMMOTT, continuing his speech, said in addition to the fact that everything would be made dearer by these proposals there were other terrors so far as the cotton trade was concerned in connection with it. There was the danger that reprisals might be made against cotton on account of our imposing import duties on other articles. If we resorted to a protectionist *régime* in this matter, it would be manifestly unfair not to allow India to resort to protection also, which would react considerably on the cotton trade of this country. Another danger was that we should be menaced with an increase in the price of raw cotton. The Colonial Secretary had approved of Mr. Charles Booth's recommendations. Mr. Charles Booth recommended a 5 per cent. import duty on all articles introduced into this country from abroad, whether food or raw materials, and a 10 per cent. duty on manufactures. A 5 per cent. duty on all cotton coming to this country would bring in something like £2,000,000 to the Exchequer, but he knew perfectly well that the matter could not stop there, and therefore proposed also a system of drawbacks upon manufactured goods exported from this country. Such drawbacks on manufactured cotton would amount to at least £1,500,000, so that the ultimate benefit which the Exchequer would receive would be only some £500,000. Could anybody conceive a more stupid proposal than to tax a trade with a turnover of £90,000,000 or £100,000,000 a year in order to bring in £500,000 to the Exchequer? The inevitable result would be that no spinner would use cotton coming from India or the Colonies. He would get all his cotton from foreign countries in order to get back the whole benefit therefrom of the drawback. That had been the effect, so he had been informed, of the corn duties which were recently imposed, and which were taken off last year. He had been told that the effect among the millers of Liverpool had been to increase the use of foreign corn, and to decrease the use of home corn, and the effect would certainly be the same with regard to cotton. He did not suggest for a moment that every trade would be affected so strongly as the cotton trade, but every trade would be affected, and it was only a matter of degree. The exported manufactured goods of this country as a whole were much greater than the imported goods, and the principle applicable to the cotton trade applied to trade as a whole. It was a mistake and a delusion to suppose that even if trade as a whole benefited by this new policy, every trade would. It was assumed that some trades might benefit without hurting others; he did not agree with that assumption. He believed that some would benefit and some would not. Injury must result to the cotton trade if tariffs were imposed for it depended not on the home but foreign markets in which it could not raise its price in consequence of the increased cost of manufacture. Therefore, if the cost of the food and the wages of the operatives were raised, a disaster would overtake the cotton trade which was so vast an industry that any disaster happening to it would be a national calamity.

Turning to the general question, he was lost in astonishment at the fact that these new proposals had been so suddenly sprung upon the country. He did not allude to what the protagonists of this policy said in 1885, but in 1885 every symptom now complained of was apparent and he would say that those who were in favour of protection then and were in favour of protection now were greater statesmen by far than those who had become protectionist so recently. In June, 1900, the right hon. Member for West Birmingham said—

> "The prosperity of the country during the last five years has been beyond record. Never before has labour been so well employed or so well remunerated."

On the 24th of October the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Is it too much to say that in these last twelve months the Empire has been born anew."

And again on 10th May, 1901, the right hon. Gentleman had said—

> "Do not let us exaggerate. When every penny of the new taxation has been paid, the United Kingdom will still be, in proportion, the most lightly taxed nation in Europe."

First of all they had those statements on the authority of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. Three years afterwards, they were told the Empire was in danger by the same gentleman, who, in a speech at Leeds, said as regards the progress of the country—

> "Speaking generally, I say that it is true that in the comparative wealth of the country, in the rate of wages, and in the condition of pauperism, they (the protected nations) have made more progress than we have. Taking these protected nations as a whole—they comprise every nation in Europe and the United States, the Colonies, and many other countries—you will find that statement absolutely correct."

In regard to that statement, Mr. Bowley, the well-known statistician, challenged the Tariff Reform League to produce satisfactory evidence for that statement, and said that as a preliminary he would ask for—

> "The evidence for any two countries, as I greatly doubt the existence of sufficient statistics of wages and pauperism for the last twenty years in any countries, except perhaps the United Kingdom, the United States of America, France, Germany, and New South Wales."

The Tariff Reform League had taken the challenge of Mr. Bowley lying down; they did not reply to it for the simple reason, he supposed, that they could not. He did not know whether the statement which had just been made by the President of the Board of Trade would affect the situation materially. The right hon. Gentleman had made it perfectly clear that, so far as he himself was concerned, he did not advocate retaliation from a protectionist point of view, and it must be remembered that the right hon. Gentleman had spoken on behalf of the Government. The question he (Mr. Emmott) desired to ask, and it was one which was germane to the consideration of the subject, was this. Nothing more had been heard than the fact that a second pamphlet had been handed to the Cabinet by the Prime Minister, which directly recommended the taxation of food, and what he desired to know was, how the taxation of food now stood in the Government programme. It had been denied by one right hon. Gentleman, and it had been accepted by another, and everyone was in the dark. Testing this question from the standpoint of protection *versus* free trade, the allegation was made that protectionist countries had made more progress than we in the last few years. My first point is one of dynamics not statics. It was said that 13,000,000 people of their country were on the verge of starvation. In order to arrive at that figure, by Mr. Rowntree's method, it would be necessary to include in that proportion the three classes of wage earners, A, B, and C. Class A were those who brought home under 18s. a week; Class B were those who brought home from 18s. to 21s. a week; and Class C were those who had from 21s. to 30s. a week coming into their house. Let them compare those statistics with those of Germany. They had no accurate figures for any part of Germany except Prussia, which, however, is not the least prosperous portion of the German Empire. The Prussian figures showed that the proportion of households where £45 or less a year (or about 18s. per week) was brought in, was about 60 per cent. of the whole, against which Mr. Rowntree's figures showed 30 per cent. up to 30s. per week. Turning to the dynamics of the question the Blue-book showed beyond all doubt or cavil that the increase in the wages in this country had been greater than either in France or America. He would leave them out. Comparing England with Germany he showed them whereas in England, the wages of the skilled artisan had risen from 29s. 2d. in 1886 to 36s. in 1900, or an advance of 6s. 10d., in Germany the wages had risen from 18s. 10d. in 1886 to 22s. 6d. in 1900, or an advance of 3s. 8d. Would not the working men prefer an advance of 6s. 10d. on a wage of 29s. to an advance of 3s. 8d. on a wage of 18s. 10d.? Then figures with regard to the prices of bread and meat showed them there had been an enormous decrease in the prices of those commodities in this country as compared with Germany, so that not only in money wages had there been a great advance, but real wages had increased even out of proportion to the advance in money wages. He also applied the test of pauperism, of the income-tax, and the want of employment; and showed that conditions in protected countries were less favourable than in Great Britain. In Germany the falling off in trade had been so great that the employment of male adults had decreased between June, 1900, to March, 1901, by 10 per cent. No such decrease had taken place in this country, although trade was much worse than it was three or four years ago. In all this there was evidence of a greater advance in this country than in Germany.

In regard to the increase of exports a general statement had been made that protectionist countries were increasing their exports more quickly than free-trade countries. He challenged that statement, and taking the cases of New South Wales and Victoria, and Sweden and Denmark, he showed that the free-trade countries, or countries which imposed a moderate tariff, had made greater progress than those which were more protectionist. He applied another test. He divided the nations of Europe into three categories—those which were free-trade countries, as England and Holland; those which were moderately protectionist, as Germany, Norway, Belgium, and Switzerland; and those which were highly protectionist, as France, Spain, Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Russia. Taking figures for these three groups, he showed that whereas the increase of exports in the first group, between 1892 and 1900, had been £128,000,000, in the second group the increase had been £114,000,000, and in the highly protectionist countries it had been only £60,000,000. These figures showed that the high protectionist group had advanced the least of the three, although they had a vastly greater population. Taking the imports, he said there had been a decided advance on imports, both of the free-trade group and the moderately protected group, but a very small increase in the highly protected group.

The figures showed beyond all question that if they wanted to increase exports, they must at the same time increase imports. That stood theoretically and to commonsense, while at the same time the figures proved it practically. Per head of the population in the free-trade group the figures were in 1882, £7 12s. 6d.; and for 1900, £9 4s. 6d. For the moderate protection group in 1882, £4 10s.; and in 1900, £5 1s. For the high protection group in 1882, £1 15s.; in 1900, £1 14s. So that there was a large increase in the free-trade group, a moderate increase in the moderate protection group, and an actual decrease in the high protection group. Those figures disproved the benefits of protection, at any rate of high protection to the export trade. He must say in regard to this matter if they took an intermediate period, from 1890 to 1900, it would put a somewhat different aspect on the question. In that period the exports from the moderate protection group advanced more than from the free-trade group. In that moderate protection group Germany was the greatest factor, and in the free-trade group the United Kingdom was the greatest factor; and it was perfectly true that the German exports had gone ahead to a larger extent than ours had done. Why was that? During the last ten years Germany had had a lower tariff on food products than in the preceding ten years. The exports from Germany in 1890–4 amounted to £3 2s. 9d. per head of the population; in 1895–9 they were £3 10s. 7d.; and in 1900–2 they were £4. In the United Kingdom the exports per head were 1890–4, £6 2s. 11d.; 1895–9, £6 0s. 4d.; 1900–2, £6 13s 6d., He had excluded ships from these figures.

and there was nothing alarming about them. We had advanced less in the earlier period, but more in the comparison between 1895–9 and 1900–2. The point was this: that both countries had progressed, but Germany a little more than the United Kingdom; but to anyone who said that this was caused by the moderate protection of Germany, he would point out that in the same period Holland, which was practically a free-trade country, advanced more than Germany, and that Denmark advanced more than Sweden. Under these circumstances it was perfectly impossible to put the German advance down to protection. There were many other reasons which might account for that advance. There was the policy of cartels, and of dumping; there was the fact that Germany had a better education than we had, and although that argument had been sneered at, it was of the utmost importance, for an analysis of the exports of Germany showed that the increase was in those trades generally where education told. Then there was the cost of transport, about which Germany had done so much, and we so little. There was further the commercial energy and adaptability of the Germans as compared with Englishmen. These were sufficient reasons to account for the difference without going to the question of protection; and we could imitate Germany in these three latter directions. It should be remembered that Germany was now going to raise her tariff, and that would increase the cost of her food. Under her new tariff he therefore did not dread the competition of Germany as much as before. In his opinion the whole protectionist argument would fall if it were not for Germany. It was absolutely contradicted by the experience of other countries, and in the face of the waste and friction which would follow any change would it not be folly to alter our fiscal plans? Especially was this the case, because if we were to imitate Germany we should have to tinker with the tariff every few years, and he asked any Member of Parliament what time there would then be for this House to deal with other affairs.

He had tried to meet the case for protection fairly and squarely, not by wise saws or musty shibboleths, but by modern instances and concrete facts. He should leave this question uncompleted if he did not refer to the dynamics of protection which had an important bearing on the question. The Prime Minister had told them in his pamphlet that Germany, America, and France had shown "no sign of any wish to relax their system." For the moment he admitted that that was correct; but how about the future? Did we not often mistake tendencies as continuing tendencies when they had reached their climax? He ventured to give the simile suggested to him by the recent extraordinary speculations in cotton. A week ago the price of cotton had reached its highest, and the tendency to increase looked like continuing, but to-day the markets were lower. So, he maintained, that when the protectionist tendency was looking the strongest he was inclined to think that a change was coming. He would give his reason for thinking so. The real question which every nation had to solve was: what is their ideal? Was it to be a self-sustained kingdom or empire, or was it to increase the foreign export trade? In the extraordinary jumble of reasons given to the country for protection last autumn and winter, these two ideas had been both put forward and inextricably confused. But they were antagonistic and distinct from each other. There were some nations which showed considerable muddle-headedness in mixing the idea of being self-contained and the glory of an increase of foreign exports. If they wanted self-sustenance they must regret foreign exports; if they wanted to sell to another nation, they must buy from it. Any other theory would land them in the hopeless quagmire of the old mercantile theory. If they went in for self-sustenance they must impose high duties, and if for foreign exports they must impose low duties. When Germany raised her tariff it was done at the behest of the agrarians. He asked would it last? At any rate there was very grave doubt about it. Count Caprivi was congratulated by the German Emperor as the saviour of his country in 1891 when he reduced the price of food. He believed that Germany was more likely to retrace its steps than to go on with the present system. The German ideal was a foreign export trade, but she could not increase that by unduly increasing her tariff. The ideal of France was to be a self-containing empire, and she had the means for that while her population was not progressive. The ideal of the United States seemed to be rather an increase of foreign exports than a self-sustaining empire. Mr. Schwab's ludicrous boast about never blowing out a single blast furnace for pig-iron in the United States had been falsified, and the production of pig-iron in that country was little more than 50 per cent. of what it was twelve months ago. If the tendency in the three protectionist commercial nations was not to increase, but to lower tariffs, would it not be well for us to wait and see what was to happen. Were we sure that we were not better off with our elastic system, with many small trades, rather than dependent upon two or three great trades? The magnificent edifice of British commerce founded on the rock of free competition had withstood the storms of fifty years, and still towered above that of all other countries, and was the envy and admiration of the world. It was better fitted to meet the winds of hostile tariffs, because its master-builders had so fashioned it that in addition to the stately halls of greater trades, there were endless smaller rooms devoted to minor industries. He wished to say that while we ought to watch and be careful of our woollen, cotton, and iron trades, he was not inclined to sneer at the fact that we were successful in the manufacture of jams and pickles. What was our ideal? A self-sustaining empire or an increase in our foreign exports? Sometimes they were told one thing, and sometimes the other. Our ideal had been free trade in every portion of the Empire which we ourselves controlled; free imports to our self-governing colonies, and to foreign nations also, not for their benefit, but because that by this policy we did better for ourselves. He thought it would be a sorry day if we threw our weight on the side of protection. As it was the scales were comparatively evenly balanced, and our example might alter enormously the dynamics; it might inevitably tend to the further closing of foreign markets. On the other hand patience and well-doing in the policy under which we had become the most prosperous nation of Europe would mean, he believed, that before long the lessening of protective tariffs now raised against us would leave us the ultimate command of the neutral markets of the world. Therefore, in the interests of the country to which he belonged, and of the Empire which he loved, he should vote with heart and soul for the Amendment of his right hon. friend.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.): The subject before the House is so large, and its scope so wide, that I think we must all feel that it is absolutely impossible to deal with it fully in the course of a single debate, and, therefore, I cannot but express a feeling of regret that, while it was yet new in the minds of our countrymen, this House could not have been afforded an opportunity of discussing it. I think in those days we might have been able to deal with it without an absolutely Party bias, which perhaps now has become absolutely impossible, and I feel that all the more because, although the right hon. Member for Montrose took, I think, much the same view that I do, that it ought to be possible to dissociate it from Party feeling, yet in the very form of his Amendment he has compelled us to consider it in connection with the Party to which we belong. This subject has nothing to do necessarily with the Address in Answer to the Gracious Speech from the Throne. There is no mention of it in the Gracious Speech, and surely those who most desire that our present fiscal policy should continue will not complain of that omission. There is nothing, so far as I am aware, in the Question which will impair "our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year." Nobody supposes that, assuming this Parliament continues in existence, the finance of the year will have anything to do with the new fiscal policy. I notice that, although I suppose the right hon. Gentleman is the author of the phrase I have quoted, he did not attempt to justify the inclusion of it in his Amendment. No, Sir, I do not understand why the right hon. Gentleman could not accept the invitation of the Home Secretary and delay the discussion of the question until the Prime Minister, whose absence every man in the House regrets, was able to speak on it in behalf of the Government, and until the right hon. Gentleman and those who agree with him could obtain the unbiased opinion of the House upon the Motion itself without any reference to the Party to which we may belong. The right hon. Gentleman has chosen another course. Last year the Opposition, though invited, wisely, as I think, refrained from bringing forward this question in connection with a vote of censure on the Government. Why have they adopted a different course now? I do not think that an Amendment to the Address is quite the same thing as a vote of censure, but practically it is, if carried, an expression of no confidence in the Government of the day, and would, according to our ancient custom, practically involve a change of Government. There may be this reason. Since we met last session His Majesty's Government have declared their policy upon the fiscal question. The Opposition may disapprove of that policy, or they may disapprove also of the position which, in their opinion, His Majesty's Government may have seemed to take up with regard to—what shall I say?—the mission which has been undertaken in the country by my right hon. friend the Member of West Birmingham. Now, I differ widely in this matter, and, so far as I know, in this matter only, from my right hon. friend. We regret the necessity of his absence from this debate, but in his absence I may safely say that there is no one in this country, who through his ability, his eloquence, his energy, and his service to the State, has more won the confidence of his countrymen than my right hon. friend.

I think I shall not be wrong in assuming that the determination of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite to insist on bringing forward this matter in the manner to which I have ventured to take exception is due to the cause to which I have alluded. [An Hon. Member on the Opposition Bench: What cause?] First it is their objection to his policy; and, secondly, the manner in which, in their minds, His Majesty's Government have associated themselves with the mission of my right hon. friend. On the opening day of the session, the Leader of the Opposition said that in his opinion the action of the Government in this matter had been the greatest imposture that had ever been foisted upon the country and upon Parliament. I wish he had reserved those words until the Prime Minister, to whom, of course, they mainly referred, had been in his place. But I will try as an independent Member, perhaps, sitting where I do, more biased in favour of the Government of the day than the right hon. Gentleman, to place before the House what I think is a fairer interpretation of the conduct of my right hon. friend. Sir, my right hon. friend the Prime Minister has not concealed the fact that personally he is in some sympathy with the policy of colonial preference. I regret that view, but we are all entitled to our individual opinion. But my right hon. friend has recognised his responsible position, as Prime Minister of the Crown, for the welfare of the Empire, and, as Leader of one of the two great Parties in the State, for the unity of the Party which he leads. My right hon. friend has recognised the limits and established the limits within which he considers the policy of his Government ought wisely and properly to be confined. He has stated, I think plainly, to the country what that policy is very possibly at some sacrifice of his own opinion. He has been rewarded by calumny and by innuendoes to the effect that he has abdicated in favour of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham, and that he is a mere tool of my right hon. friend. That has been said all over the country. And that is his reward. Now, in my humble opinion, my right hon. friend has taken a course in this matter worthy of his high position, and if he has sacrifed his own opinions in any degree for the sake of Party unity, why, Sir, I can remember any time within the last ten years that influential writers and speakers on the Opposition side have begged right hon. Gentlemen and noble Lords on their side to do the same in the interests of the Party to which they belong. That has been the position taken up by my right hon. friend.

But there are words in this Amendment as to "conflicting declarations from His Majesty's Ministers," and I feel there is some justification for those words. I have seen with regret during the last few months that members of the Government, finding it necessary to speak, and in some cases to speak often on this subject, have not taken the course which their chief has taken, of explaining their policy and justifying it from both sides, but have gone on to declare themselves admirers, if not followers, of the policy of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham. I think that was unfortunate; I think it was hardly fair to the chief under whom they serve. I think it would have been better perhaps if those who deemed it necessary to express such opinions had taken the manly and straightforward course of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham and gone out into the wilderness to preach the new fiscal gospel. But I do not apply any language of that sort to the speech which we have listened to-night. We could all have preferred that in answer to the right hon. Member for Montrose the Prime Minister himself should have stated and explained the policy of the Government. That could not be. It is no fault of the Prime Minister, but, in his absence, that duty was undertaken, no doubt at the request of his colleagues, by the Minister who is in very close relation with the Prime Minister, and probably knows everything in his mind, and who himself represents that Department of the State which is charged with these particular affairs. I heard with the greatest satisfaction the speech of my right hon. friend. What does my right hon. friend say? First of all, he put aside that peculiar notion which, as far as I know, has really not been spread abroad by anyone in authority, that this country is on the brink of ruin. Secondly, he reiterated the declaration already plainly made by the Prime Minister at Sheffield, that taxes on food are not included in the policy of His Majesty's Government. Thirdly, he stated that the duty averaging 10 per cent. on manufactured and partly manufactured goods is also excluded from that policy, that the policy of His Majesty's Government is only the policy of retaliation, and that the issue at the next general election, whenever it may come, will only be that policy, and that the result of that general election, if it should be favourable to His Majesty's Government, would not entitle it to carry out the policy of colonial preference. My right hon. friend clinched the matter by declaring himself opposed to protection, no doubt on behalf of the Government. He stated that in his opinion protection was not a wise policy, and he explained that by protection he meant the imposition of a tax on the consumer for the benefit of the producer.

Now, I would appeal to my right hon. friend the Member for Montrose Burghs what his object is in desiring to censure the Government. To me, at any rate, who am a supporter of the Government, the declaration that we have heard to-night is completely satisfactory. Of course, it is possible that hon. Members opposite may consider that they see the cloven hoof of protection in the policy of retaliation. If that be so, no doubt they will persevere with their Amendment, and it would be perfectly fair of them to do so; but I venture to say that it is not an issue which will meet with the acceptance of the House or of the country. I was glad to hear the President of the Board of Trade express his agreement with the Duke of Devonshire in a view which I have always personally taken from the day on which I read the speech of the Prime Minister at Sheffield—namely, that the policy of retaliation is not a step towards the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, but is absolutely opposed to it. In the course of his speech the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose Burghs quoted the speech of the noble Lord the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and my noble friend explained what he meant by his words. I think that the House quite understood. I think that the object of His Majesty's Government and the object of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham were at the commencement the same. I believe the object of both of them was to increase our export trade, and a very good object too.

But the methods, as my noble friend said, which His Majesty's Government have adopted with that view and the methods of my right hon. friend the ex-Colonial Secretary are different. The method of His Majesty's Government is the method of retaliation. What they want is to get as much as they can of our manufactured goods into foreign countries. They propose to negotiate with foreign countries, and, if negotiation cannot be carried to a satisfactory result, to threaten them, and if necessary to impose retaliatory duties against the goods of these foreign countries in order to effect their object; and when that object is effected these duties will come off. But the method of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham is a different one. What my right hon. friend proposes is, first, colonial preference, or, in other words, the imposition of duties in this country upon the foreign goods which we most require; and, secondly, a general tariff upon manufactured or partly-manufactured goods averaging 10 per cent. coming from all countries, whether protective or not, and of course to be permanently maintained. That is a totally different method from the method of the Prime Minister. With regard to the policy of retaliation—is that policy necessary or not? What is the grievance? I was glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman in moving his Amendment admitted that the state of of our industries was not all we could desire. [Mr. JOHN MORLEY: Hear, hear.] Surely it will be agreed by all of us that foreign protective tariffs have injured, and in some cases seriously injured, our trade, not only in our export trade but in our home markets. Surely it will be agreed by all of us that if we can induce foreign countries to lower those tariffs we shall be acting in the real interest of freer trade, and conferring a benefit on the world. I do not think that it will be denied by anyone that if we could do this, as was done in the Cobden treaty, by lowering our duties here that policy would be one which would be supported by the House and the country. I am not sure that by some process of lowering or readjustment of our present duties, such as those, for example, on wines and spirits, something of this kind might not even now be done. But of course the question really is whether you should raise or impose duties in order to carry out this policy. Well, that is a question of the balance of advantage and disadvantage. I can conceive cases in which it would be absurd to undertake such a policy; I can conceive other cases, and not a few, when the advantages of the policy would be greater than its possible disadvantages. What has the Prime Minister said? He has said that he does not contemplate entering into a general tariff war or adopting the foreign system of maximum and minimum tariffs. He has said that we might tell any foreign country which we thought was treating us with outrageous unfairness that unless they modified their tariff to our advantage we should feel ourselves compelled to take some steps with regard to their exports to us which they would not like, provided that we could do it without disadvantage to ourselves. Well, is not that a reasonable policy?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: What steps? The whole point is, what steps?

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: What steps? Is it not clear, Sir, that as His Majesty's Government do not contemplate what may be called dealing with this matter by a general tariff, but dealing with it in individual instances, it is impossible for them to state precisely beforehand the particular steps which they would have to take? Would you ask a doctor to write out the same prescription for all his patients? I have no doubt that we shall have, before the country is asked to pronounce on this matter, some clearer statement than we have yet received as to the particular steps that might be taken; but I wish the House to note on this point that to-night my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade distinctly recognised the extreme difficulty of taking such steps with regard to those imports of food and raw material the cheapness and abundance of which are absolutely necessary to the welfare of the country, and that, further, he distinctly stated, on behalf of the Government, that they do not contemplate taking action in this matter by the imposition of retaliatory duties without the authority of Parliament. Those are statements which to my mind are extremely satisfactory, and I do not think that we could fairly ask His Majesty's Government at the present time to go beyond them.

Well, but I would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose Burghs himself. I was glad to hear that he said that if a case of outrageous unfairness on the part of any foreign country against us could be adduced, and Parliament were satisfied of three things (1) of the fact, (2) that reprisals would stop it, (3) that those reprisals would not do us more harm than good, then he practically pledged that side of the House—[HON. MEMBERS: No, no!]—he practically pledged that side of the House to support His Majesty's Government on such an occasion. I am glad to note that as a distinct advance towards the policy of the Government. There was a case not very long ago of outrageous unfairness in the case of the action of foreign countries with regard to bounties on sugar and the mode in which those bounties and protective duties were utilised—outrageous unfairness to the sugar producers in our Colonies and to the sugar refiners in this country. That was the fact. Reprisals were suggested, not by us, but by other countries, as the means by which that unfairness might be stopped—reprisals in the shape of a prohibitory duty upon all bounty-fed sugar imported into any country signing the convention. I think it is perfectly clear that that policy has not done this country more harm than good. [MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Great harm.] Well, I wait for proof of that statement. I do not believe that proof can be given, at any rate it was not given last year. But practically all the Opposition voted against the Sugar Convention. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on his advance. Of course I can understand that the view of the right hon. Gentleman may be that retaliatory duties if imposed must necessarily remain and become protective. Well, I do not think that is a fact, and I will again refer to sugar to show why. What was the case with regard to the confectionery and jam-making trades in England? They were practically bounty-fed, because, through the operation of foreign bounties on sugar, they were accustomed to get, and they were nourished by getting, their sugar cheaper than the cost of production. It is the same thing as protection.

A couple of years ago the Government of the day, anxious, I think, to promote the true interests of free trade—that is to say, to promote the natural course of trade—agreed to the Sugar Convention. These trades protested. They said they would be ruined. They have not been ruined yet. But the sugar bounties were abolished in face of their protest, and, therefore, I do not believe that any single interest, if temporarily protected by a duty imposed for the purpose of retaliation, would prevent its repeal in the interest of freer trade. Some say that the policy of retaliation is impracticable—that it is doomed to fail, because in certain other tariff wars it has not succeeded. I attach the greatest importance to this fact, which came before my notice most plainly in the negotiations with regard to the Sugar Convention — that all European countries attach enormous importance to admission to our markets. I have not the slightest doubt that, if they entertained any real fear of exclusion from our market, their temper towards us in tariff negotiations would be much more agreeable than it has been under the present conditions; and in those negotiations we should be backed up by what I believe to be an increasing feeling and knowledge on the part of consumers abroad of the enormous mischief that these protective tariffs and bounties do. That was perfectly clear in all that happened with regard to the conference which arrived at the Sugar Convention, because the real motive power in that convention was the disgust of the taxpayers and the consumers in France and Germany at what they had to pay to the sugar refiners and others engaged in the sugar trade. I want this policy to be tried. I believe it is in the interests of free trade that it should be tried, and I am glad that His Majesty's Government have announced their intention of trying it. One thing only I would say—I should like them to try it at once. The principle of it was tried in the Sugar Convention, and I venture to say that it has been assented to in that Convention by this House and by the country. I do not quite see why we should wait for the general election to try it in another instance. I fancy there are negotiations now going on with certain foreign countries with regard to commercial treaties, and if the right hon. Gentlemen on that Bench will only put their foot down in this matter and will deal with those negotiations on such a principle they will have no warmer supporter in this House than myself.

There is one thing I should say, however, that you must dissociate this matter from the question of colonial preference. In my belief the two things, under certain circumstances at any rate, would be found incompatible. What is the principle of retaliation? Surely, that you should treat other countries as they treat you. What is the principle of colonial preference? Surely, that you should treat a colony better than any other country, because it is part of the Empire. How are you to work the two things together? Now let us see. Suppose 2s. a quarter were imposed upon all corn coming from the United States, and Canada was exempted from that duty. Suppose the result was what those who would promote colonial preference desire—that a great deal of our corn supply were to come from Canada instead of from the United States, and suppose that the corn growers in the United States induced their Government to propose to this Government that if they would remit the 2s. duty on United States corn they, the United States, would remit certain of their protective duties which pressed most hardly upon our manufactured goods, and the remission of which would do enormous benefit to the trade and commerce of this country. What must the answer be under colonial preference? Surely this, "Our word is pledged to Canada; we cannot remit the duty." Yet the offer from America might be infinitely more valuable to our trade and industries here than anything that Canada had given in return for preference or could possibly give. Would not that be a dangerous limitation to the freedom of bargaining which His Majesty's Government desire to resume with reference to this matter? Would it not excite bitter feelings in this country on the part of those interested, whether as employers or workmen, in the industries which might be enormously benefited by the remission of these United States duties. Would that tend towards the unity of the Empire? I am afraid it would be found in working that difficulties of this sort would constantly and continually arise. I would say this. It is a very inconvenient thing to bind this country by treaty not to impose duties; but it is something more than an inconvenient thing to bind this country by treaty not to take off duties in circumstances which no man can possibly foresee.

What are the duties which, under the scheme of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham, would have to be imposed? Their object is avowedly to hinder the importation of foreign goods—the foreign goods which we require — into this country, and so far to undo the effect of the millions which we have spent in our ships, our railways, our docks, and our post office and telegraph system in order to promote the freer and cheaper transit of goods. And, Sir, what is to be the result? In the words of my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade, the result will be the imposition of taxes on the consumer for the benefit of the producer which he describes as protection. It would be grossly unfair to compare the duties which are proposed by my right hon. friend upon corn and flour and meat and dairy produce with the old protective duties. They could not possibly have the same effect as the old protective duties, which were deliberately intended to keep everything foreign out of this country. But that is not quite the case with regard to the average 10 per cent. on manufactured and partly manufactured goods. I am afraid it would be found that there would be a very real protective effect with regard to manufactured goods as a result of those duties, and that effect would be shown in largely raised prices to the great injury of all consumers, especially in the working classes. The smaller duties are proposed to give a preference in point of money to the home producer or the colonial producer. If they are found to be not enough to give that advantage, why the principle has been accepted, and you will never be able, if you are to act in harmony with the Colonies, if you are to satisfy the clients of my right hon. friend the Member for Sleaford, and they are pretty greedy clients, you will never be able to resist the demand for an increase, and the day will come, as it has come in all other countries that have begun this course, when those duties will be as protective as the duties on manufactured goods. There are curiously contradictory arguments used in this matter. I have been told by my right hon. friend the Member for Sleaford that these duties on corn, meat, and dairy produce will not increase prices.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The price of bread I said would not be raised.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The right hon. Gentleman says so now, but then he goes down and tells his farmers that they will largely benefit by these duties. I want to know how? Sometimeus we are told that a tax on manufactured goods will keep foreign manufactures out of the country and give more employment to our workmen here. At other times we are told that the same duties on goods coming from foreign countries will produce an enormous revenue. Well, they cannot do both. When my right. hon. friend says that these duties on agricultural produce will not raise prices, then I will ask him to explain why he does not press for duties on maize and bacon? Because they would be very useful in the present growth of public expenditure; and why, if they will not raise prices, is it suggested that the working classes should be compensated for them by a reduction of the duties on tea and sugar, the greater part of which, I am afraid, from my own experience in the reduction of duties, would probably go into the pockets of the producers or dealers in those articles rather than into the pockets of the unfortunate consumer. Everybody who has had to deal with taxation knows that it would be much more easy to reach the consumer by imposing a duty than to relieve him by taking it off; but I am quite unable to understand how, if prices are raised here by these duties, practically meaning that all of us, the richest and the poorest, will get less for our money, the result can possibly be to stimulate the productive power of the country and to increase employment.

It would be wrong of me, after the kind way in which the House has listened to my observations, to attempt to deal with statistics, or go into detailed argument; but this I will venture to say, that, though I would not for a moment contend that there are not factors that enter into the comparative position and welfare of the working class population in the various countries of the world besides protection and free trade, yet this, I think, is clear from the Government statistics—that in this country employment is more certain and more regular, wages are better, and hours are shorter than they are in protected countries. But, Sir, I know that the proposals to which I am objecting were not originally introduced, although they have recently been defended by protectionist arguments—they were not originally introduced by my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham on that ground alone. He brought them forward because he believed that only by increasing our trade with our Colonies could we counteract the evil influence of foreign protectionist tariffs on our exported manufactured goods; and, secondly, that by increasing our trade with our Colonies, we should do much to promote the unity of the Empire. If the policy of His Majesty's Government is successful of forcing foreign countries to lower their protectionist tariffs against us, I do not think there will be any reason for artificially stimulating our trade with our Colonies. It is very good, it is rapidly increasing, and I think it will take care of itself. But I admit the strength of the sentiment which underlies the second argument of my right hon. friend. My right hon. friend the other day, asked us to think Imperially. [OPPOSITION laughter.] I should not receive that suggestion with derision. I am quite sure that my right hon. friend did not mean for a moment that he contemplated the idea of a self-sustaining Empire. The thing is an impossibility. It is a Chinese idea. It would be a fatal check to all prosperity, and, politically, and nationally, it would be dangerous. It is of vast national importance to us that foreign countries should be interested in our foreign trade. Why, Sir, cannot we conceive circumstances in which the great interest on the part of that great Power on the other side of the Atlantic to prevent food being declared contraband of war might be of enormous importance in a great national crisis? No, Sir, I am sure my right hon. friend never contemplated the ideal of a self-sustaining Empire. What he did contemplate was a great increase of trade with our Colonies which would conduce to the unity of the Empire. I think the enthusiasm for the Colonies of my right hon. friend has sometimes led him to go further than I should be disposed to follow him in this matter. He said the other day that the future of the country and the British race lies in our Colonies and our possessions. Sir, I think it lies here. We, at any rate, are primarily interested in the United Kingdom. The interests of the United Kingdom are the greatest interests in the whole Empire.

But, Sir, in considering this matter, we are bound to consider, not only the interests of the United Kingdom, but also the interests of the Empire. And what are they? The idea of colonial preference—the principle of it—has been supported by a sentiment to which I attach enormous value. I do not think anybody can exaggerate the important service which my right hon. friend the Member for Birmingham has done to this country and to the Empire both here and in the Colonies. But we cannot deal with these matters by increasing sentiment alone. Suppose the principle accepted. When we come to details we may be quite certain that the Colonies will deal with them in a spirit of hard prosaic business, and expect us to do the same. Very well. Now, I recognise and admire the spirit in which this matter has been dealt with so far by the Colonies. They have said to us plainly, "Don't hurt yourselves in order to benefit us." Their whole tone has been that of a speech, which I read the other day, from one of the Canadian Ministers, who protested against Canada being pictured as a squalling infant clamouring for preference, and saying that if she did not get it she would break up the family feast and leave the Empire. All that the Colonies have ever expressed a desire for in this matter is a fair bargain. Now, what are the proposals before us? My right hon. friend has made these proposals—5 per cent. on corn, a higher duty on flour, a small duty on meat and dairy produce, colonial produce to be admitted free in competition with our own farmers, just as it is now. What has he got on the other side? As yet he has had no definite offer. We hear a good deal about offers by the Colonies. I do not at all deny that the Colonies would desire to enter into bargains with regard to colonial preference; but when we want to know, as we must know before we adopt the principle, what they will give in return, we get no answer. My hon. friend the Member for Sheffield has said that Canada has already given 33 per cent. Does my hon. friend really believe that that 33 per cent., although I admit of great value as showing the kindly feeling of Canada towards us, has done any material good to our country? ["Yes."] Then, how does my hon. friend account for this fact—that since this preference has been given, the whole trade of Canada having greatly increased, the trade of Canada with the United States, with France, and with Germany has increased more in proportion than the trade with Great Britain? To make any fair bargain in this matter what would unquestionably be necessary would be a real measure of free trade to us in colonial markets in the only things which we can export to these markets—namely, manufactured goods. Now, has any colony ever offered that? No, Sir. All of them tell us, and my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham has never been able to produce the slightest evidence to the contrary, that they will protect their manufactures against us. Is it a fair bargain that colonial products should come into this country free, while our products cannot go into the colonies except under protectionist tariffs? Let me carry this matter further. There may be something worse. There is a question which has never yet been answered. You propose the imposition of a duty averaging 10 per cent. on manufactured and partly manufactured goods. Is that duty to be applied to colonial imports or not? I do not hear an answer. If it is to be levied on colonial imports the principle of colonial preference is gone. If it is not to be levied on the colonial imports, in the first place you will lose an enormous proportion of the revenue which might be derived from such a tax by frauds of certificates of origin and by exportation of foreign goods to the Colonies in order that they may be sent by the Colonies here, which would be much easier now than it was before owing to the cheapness of freight. And you will do something more. Our manufacturers here complain bitterly of the unfair competition in our markets of German and United States iron, for example, under their protectionist system. Very well. There is a bounty upon iron in Canada. We all hope and expect that the industries of our Colonies will increase and expand, and rival at some day or other the industries of the mother country. Will Imperial sentiment reconcile our manufacturers here to be ruined by bounty-fed or duty-fed colonial goods any more than they are now reconciled to being ruined by similar goods from foreign countries? These questions will have to be answered before any practical action can be taken, I will venture to say, with regard to a discussion with the Colonies upon colonial preference. And there is something more. We are told that colonial preference, assuming it not to be intended on manufactured and partly manufactured goods, is to be confined to food, to corn, meat, and to dairy produce. Is that so? [A Voice: "No."] I look for an answer to my right hon. friend the Member for Sleaford. But assuming that to be so, is that likely to satisfy the Colonies? Do not we all of us know that that really will only apply to certain interests and to certain Colonies? Do not all of us feel that, for example, the timber interest in Canada will have something to say why it ought to have a preference which would be denied to it when given to the corn growing interest? Do not we feel that South Africa, which has granted us a preference, sends no food at all and sends a mere trifling amount of wine, but does send a great deal of raw material? Do not we know that the great export of Australia to this country is not food or meat, but raw material? If you are to adopt this principle of colonial preference, and if you are to do justice to all the Colonies and all the interests in those Colonies, without which your preference will be a mere beginning of jealousy and friction in the Empire, you must extend it to raw material. And when you once extend it to raw material, what will the woollen industries of Bradford, what will the building trade of this country, have to say to colonial preference?

I feel that this matter is one of such enormous importance that I will not apologise for having trespassed for so long upon the House. I am opposed to the proposals of my right hon. friend the Member for Birmingham on principle. I believe they are wrong. But let us consider them for a moment from another point of view. Put aside their merits altogether. They involve an enormous change, everybody will admit that, in our fiscal system. It is a change which surely, if adopted at all, ought to be adopted with a reasonable assurance of permanance. I think my right hon. friend the Prime Minister dealt with the matter in his speech at Manchester in a spirit of the highest wisdom. I will ask my right hon. friends who desire it to put aside the merits altogether. They will surely agree that unless this change can be permanently made it will be dangerous in the last degree to the interests of the Empire to make it at all. Now, is there anything behind this proposal representing that body of fixed sentiment and conviction which is the only sure basis of any great change? Not yet. Then, Sir, is it not wiser that we should adhere to the policy of the Government, that the attempt which has been made to pledge the whole of the Unionist Party to the policy of my right hon. friend the Member for Birmingham should be abandoned, and that the matter should be considered at leisure in the country, not for the next election, nor for by-elections, not for anything of that kind, but should be considered and discussed until one way or the other a definite and fixed conviction is arrived at? Sir, I plead strongly because I believe in the vast importance of this question. I am not a bigoted free trader. If I had been I should not have been responsible for violating the pure theory of free trade by proposing the corn duty two years ago. This country is prosperous; but I know very well that that prosperity is not universal. There are interests which are not prosperous—the agricultural interest first of all. Other countries have prospered under protection as we have prospered under free trade. But, Sir, the position of this country is unique. For two generations and more, after long deliberation, we have adopted and adhered to our present fiscal policy. The result of that has been greatly to increase our wealth, greatly to increase our population, to make us in this hemisphere at any rate, the greatest commercial, trading, and industrial community; to turn us, as has already been said, from an agricultural into an industrial country. And all this has brought about this thing in which this country is unique—that we depend mainly for our food supply, for our supply of raw materials which are absolutely necessary to our welfare, which we are bound—more bound now than ever—to get in the best and cheapest market, we depend for them upon an over-sea supply. To reverse the policy under which we have come into this position, to return, in principle at least, to something like our old tariff, embracing hundreds of articles, harassing and interfering at every point with the trade and industry of the country, is an experiment to my mind full of the greatest danger to our social and political future. If any such proposal were made to this House I should not hesitate for a moment as to my vote. But, Sir, no such proposal is before the House. The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman does not even ask us, though it might have asked us, for a mere abstract assertion of the benefits and importance of free trade; he has inextricably combined with that the question of confidence in the Government of the day. I should not under any circumstances desire to replace His Majesty's present Government by right hon. Gentlemen on the opposite Bench. But I will never desert the Government of my country at such a crisis as that which may, perhaps, at this moment be beginning in our foreign affairs. I agree with the policy which has been explained to the country by the Prime Minister, and reaffirmed by the President of the Board of Trade to-night. I desire to support the Cabinet against many, I dare say, of their own supporters who are anxious for what I consider wrong and extreme measures. And I believe that what the Prime Minister has said he will adhere to, and in that view I shall vote against the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) said the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken was not only a great financier, but one of the most fascinating personalities in the House, his fascination consisting in the fact that while no man more clearly knew his mind, no man had in greater degree the art of wrapping that mind in a certain veil of mystery. The speeches of the right hon. Gentleman could never be judged by either their exordium or their peroration; the arguments in between had to be carefully considered. If the right hon. Gentleman dissented from his own side, he had the gift of dealing out his bad arguments to his friends and his good arguments to his foes, and on the present occasion the Opposition had had his good arguments. He began by expressing his dissent from the manner in which this Motion had been brought forward in the absence of the Prime Minister. All deeply regretted that absence and its cause, but it should be remembered that during the whole of last summer Members were very forbearing, and that through the autumn an agitation unparalleled in its intensity had been carried on: was it to be supposed, therefore, that the Opposition could sit silent through the debate on the Address without endeavouring to ascertain the view of the House upon the most important question that had come before it for many a day? The right hon. Gentleman knew the mind of His Majesty's Government, as perhaps no other man, and he had proceeded with the calmness of a surgeon of great experience to go alongside the patient and tender his advice. He had diagnosed the disease, and in most kindly and sympathetic tones had stated wherein the patient was suffering. The right hon. Gentleman had the gift of what theologians called exegesis, and he had explained what the House could not have known before—what the real policy of the Government was—and he had made it clear that the Free Food Party considered that in the struggle for the mind of Ministers, their exertions had not been without avail. The right hon. Gentleman had then proceeded to deal with some of the topics embraced by the debate. He had flirted with retaliation. But it was good to pay attention to a young lady in whom those whom you wished to be your friends were peculiarly interested. Such negotiations with foreign Powers would have no warmer friend than himself. He was, however, judicious as to the way these retaliatory proposals were to be carried out. With regard to

Russia and the United States, our principal imports from those countries were food and raw materials, and they were the very things which they would suffer most from, if any attempt was made to place retaliatory duties upon them. The right hon. Gentleman did not pursue that topic further. In the course of his speech he expressed a pessimistic view of British trade. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose admitted that he did not find the trade of this country in a wholly satisfactory condition. He was quite unable to agree with those who found in the prosperity of the country anything which could give them complete assurance for the future. He held strongly that there never was a time at which this nation more required to make an effort if they wished to retain the supremacy which had distinguished them in the past, and which it lay with them as to whether it should remain with this country in the future.

While he was ready to admit that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had done the country a service by stirring up the people on this question, yet he could not help feeling that for one service he had rendered two dis-services, for he had turned attention to the wrong remedy and away from the true remedy. It was all very well to complain of Mr. Cobden because the dream of universal free trade had not been realised. He was not so sure that universal free trade would have been such a good thing for the country. Their free-trade policy had, however, been of great assistance to something else which had enabled them to be supreme, and that was that in the old days they were first in industrial methods. He blamed the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, because it had drawn attention from the only policy which gave them a chance in competing with their foreign rivals, and had led them on a line which seemed to him to be altogether false. He was one of those who thought that there were great social questions to be solved in this country, and they could only be solved by a considerable amount of interference on the part of the Government of the day with people's liberties. He had read a very interesting speech which the Colonial Secretary delivered to his constituents at Leamington the other day, and which had been alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose. The Colonial Secretary, in criticising this extravagant view of free trade, asked how they could maintain a free-trade doctrine in its entirety when they wished to put restrictions upon labour at every turn. That was a doctrine which it was quite right to put forward, but which it was equally necessary to examine very closely before accepting it. That would be a very valuable argument to those who based the case of free trade upon the doctrine of unrestricted liberty. Probably Mr. Cobden had not the same occasion to consider that doctrine as they had today. He had always refused to believe in that doctrine because he should interfere with anything in which it was proved that the welfare of the people required it. Nobody in his senses would propose to repeal the factory legislation which had had such a beneficial result in the last two generations. They should maintain the power which they had to interfere for the protection of that labour which could not take care of itself, and which, by its very circumstances and for want of organisation and the feebleness of those who created it, was unable to protect itself without interference from the State. But, while that was true, it was equally true that they wanted great mobility on the part of capital and great freedom in dealing with trade.

Experience had shown that whenever they tried to judge things for those who knew better than anybody else, because it was their own business, they always failed. Whilst protecting labour it was well to leave the utmost freedom of judgment to all those who embarked in industry. If they were going to interfere in the conduct of labour and put down, for instance, some forms of sweating, which not only disfigured their great towns, but were bad for the population, at the same time it was equally necessary that they should leave the people free to replace the thing which they could no longer produce with advantage by some other commodity produced under different conditions. He was very much struck the other day by what he saw in Yorkshire in the centre of the woollen spinning industry, where a friend of his told him what had been the history of that industry in Yorkshire. Years ago there used to be a considerable weaving as well as spinning industry in that locality. But the weaving industry had now disappeared almost and there was very little of it. He thought it was a good thing it was disappearing, because it employed men at wages which never exceeded £1 a week, and it employed women who would have been better employed attending to their families at home. In that locality they were now spinning with the finest machinery. The material went first to Germany, where there was a very low duty, and a state of things had now grown up under which it was profitable for the workers in this country and in Germany to carry on business in that way. The result in the locality he referred to was that an inferior industry had been replaced by a superior industry, and instead of the old wage of £1 a week the workers were now receiving between 30s. and 40s. per week in wages. At the technical school in that locality he saw a whole generation of people growing up experts in the making of that spinning machinery, beside which there was nothing to compare in the whole world.

There were two industries which to his mind demonstrated the great peril of endeavouring to interfere with the judgment of people as to how they should employ their own resources. At the present time there was less weaving and flax spinning in Leeds and Bradford, but were they less prosperous now than they used to be? Hon. Members opposite were always lamenting the disappearance of a particular industry, but they had to look at these things in the aggregate. He admitted the hardship caused through the displacement of an industry, but free trade was not the only thing that displaced industry. Had they conceived the real meaning of this free-trade policy which they were asked so lightly to part with? It involved industrial and social questions, and their freedom to grapple with such questions as sweating and housing. There was hardly a social question which free trade did not affect. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, animated by a depth of conviction which he recognised to the fullest, went through the country and produced a very great impression, and yet from the very beginning it had dawned on many people that the right hon. Gentleman had not fully presented the country with all the information upon which it would have to judge the case. Unfortunately it was more complicated than the story which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had told them. In the speech of the President of the Board of Trade they had just heard the result of the judicial summing up which it was the duty of a Minister to bestow on this case, a duty which the right hon. Gentleman had discharged very fully. He had carefully balanced the argument, and he had summed up in a manner which was satisfactory from the point of view of those who at any rate wished to see this policy of free trade carefully and impartially considered before it was abandoned. He was not going to summarise that speech, but it had struck him very much, because it seemed to indicate the direction in which the mind of the President of the Board of Trade had been working after reading those remarkable materials which his own officials had collected for him. His summing up of that evidence had relieved them from the fear that they were likely to be plunged in any sudden fashion in a campaign on the part of the Government in support of the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. In that state of things they were more concerned with arguments which came from other Members on the opposite side of the House which were more worthy of consideration, although he could not agree with them.

There were many hon. Members who did not go very minutely into the merits of this economic controversy and they pointed to the growth of other nations and to the extraordinary position which Great Britain held, with a small population as compared with the population of our Empire, and they asked how this country was going to face the growing power of those other nations unless they did something. He agreed with that sentiment, but where he differed was in regard to the means they suggested to attain it. It was said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, and also by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose, that they could not keep the Empire together if they were going to make this country poorer. They could not count the economic loss which would follow the adoption of the policy suggested by the late Colonial Secretary. They could not measure that loss or know where it would leave their trade. Where such a change would land them they could not tell and they could not measure the cost. The speech made at Manchester by the Prime Minister early in January had received a great deal too little attention, but that policy was re-echoed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. In that speech the Prime Minister said that until a few months ago he had believed that a fiscal basis was the only basis upon which they could draw the Empire more closely together. He went on to say that he had seen occasion to change that opinion, and had come to the conclusion that in the development of the policy of councils of the Empire there was an alternative policy to the fiscal basis to attain the end of drawing the Empire more closely together. The right hon. Gentleman illustrated this by the Council of Imperial Defence, which had been in a large measure his own child and of which he was the distinguished parent. He foreshadowed this other policy of developing the councils of the Crown in a fashion which made some of them feel that they had an alternative to the Imperial policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. That was a policy very relevant to the debate, and, having received the seal of responsible Ministers, it answered one of the most cogent arguments which had affected the minds of many men in favour of the policy of the right hon. Member for Birmingham. A good many people thought something ought to be done and they said to themselves "here is a man who has distinguished himself by the successful way he has pushed things through which he has taken in hand. Let us support him, although we may not be wholly convinced in his favour." Now they had an alternative policy which had gained importance, because it had received the seal of the responsible Ministers themselves and because the Prime Minister had embodied it in a concrete case of his own, namely, the Committee of Imperial Defence. That was a very important departure, the effect of which might be felt hereafter when dealing with the Imperial aspect of the subject which formed the topic of this Amendment. It could not be said that free trade was a merely negative policy, for it left open the door for a constructive policy affecting the various parts of the Empire, and it left open this policy of legislation in the direction they had followed by the passing of the Factory Acts, and which they would have to follow more in the future in dealing with the social problems which were crowding upon them. They were awakening to a sense of their responsibilities in all these matters and to a recognition of the duty which Government owed —and which was recognised by both Parties in the State—to the more helpless class of the community which subsisted on a mere margin of subsistence.

He was very glad that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Montrose Burghs contained a plea for a system of national education. This was not the moment to discuss that question, but it had taken a concrete shape in the course of the debate. Was it not the obvious duty of constructive free traders and those who, on whatever side of the House they sat, believed in the gospel of liberty, coupled with the doctrine of protection, to set themselves to work and try to get off the false track on which we had got, and to get back to the problem dealing with the industrial methods of this country? That was not a thing that ought to be left alone by the State to individuals. The Amendment had raised in a form which might be inconvenient the great topic which was agitating people's minds. It was perfectly true that they would not be able to get a really judicial vote upon this matter. Of course, an Amendment to the Address involved to some extent the question of confidence. He thought questions of confidence had been exaggerated in their importance. They enabled the Government to ride off and say to hon. Members behind them "Will you, our supporters, show want of confidence in us." If the Government were really in earnest about the policy of free trade—and the speech of the President of the Board of Trade gave him good hope that a majority of them were in earnest—he, for one, marvelled why they did not attach rather less importance to the technical form of the debate on the Address and let them have the benefit of a discussion in which they should get the free mind of the House in the matter. It was quite certain that they would not get it, but to-night, and in the two or three days which were ahead, they would at least have got an examination of this whole controversy in a fashion which would give the people what they had been waiting for a long time, the mind of the House of Commons upon the subject.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington) said the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down stated that exaggerated importance was attached to the question of confidence, but he did not think the right hon. Gentleman would make the appeal he made if in the future he was sitting on the Government Benches. Before coming into this House he had himself taken part in industrial concerns and he had had the opportunity of mixing with and making friends of working men. It was often said that Members of Parliament who were connected with manufactures were selfish in their views. He should like, if the House would allow him, to make a personal explanation with reference to this question. He had a paragraph in his election address when he first came to Parliament in favour of reciprocity, and he sincerely trusted the day might come when the propositions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham would be viewed wit hfavour by the British people. He believed there were a vast number of persons in this country who believed that it was absolutely necessary that there should be some radical change in our fiscal system, and he sincerely trusted hon. Members would show in the remainder of the debate that moderaton which had been shown up to the present time. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Montrose Burghs moved the Amendment in a speech no one could possibly object to. He sincerely trusted they might put aside the bitterness which they had seen in the country during the past few months. A great flood of figures had been produced in reference to this matter. Some of these were accurate and some were inaccurate. He would not deal with the figures to-night except to say that most inaccurate statements had been made with reference to the iron and steel trade. It was stated by Lord Lytton last week that the total *ad valorem* value of the iron and steel trade was £140,000,000. No one who had any knowledge of the trade could believe that that was a correct figure. It had been justified by saying that the iron and steel trade included motor-cars, pots and pans, and other things. But that was no justification.

It would be just as reasonable to include a violin in the timber trade. What they had to ask themselves was not so much whether our prosperity had been great in the past, or for what reason, but would our difficulties extend and increase in the future? In his opinion they were not likely to decrease. It had been said that many hon. Members were violent protectionists. He thought that was rather a hard term to use. At the present time we in this country taxed tea, and we allowed motor-cars to come in free of tax. We stood alone among the nations of the world in our policy in that respect.

Were the representatives of the Colonies in earnest when they passed a resolution unanimously in favour of reciprocity with this country? If they were in earnest what answer was this country going to give them? In the speeches to which they had listened they had heard no alternative. He thought that at no distant date the majority of the people of this country would believe it was necessary to bind ourselves to the Colonies by a commercial tie of some kind. He was not at all sure that a majority of the people of this country did not think so at the present moment, although he was not foolish enough to believe that when an election took place in regard to this question, the Party he belonged to would have an enormous majority. [Laughter.] Hon. Gentlemen laughed at that statement, but everybody knew very well that other questions, such as education, would come to the front, and especially representations with regard to a bread tax. [AN HON. MEMBER: Misrepresentations.] He preferred the word representations. He went recently to the Gateshead election and saw two loaves in a shop window—one professing to represent the English and the other the German loaf, the comparison being greatly in favour of the former. He did not know whether that should be called representation or misrepresentation, but no one believed that in this country such a tax could be put on bread as to produce the disparity represented by these two loaves.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) Not yet.

MR. PIKE PEASE said his hon. friend would agree with him that there would be no great change in connection with that matter except by the will of the British people. It had been said that the prosperity we had seen during the past half-century was due to a great extent to free trade. He, for one, would not deny that free trade had played an important part in the prosperity of this country, but during that period electricity and steam had revolutionised industries. It must be admitted that times were changed. Those who had gone to Gateshead would have had the opportunity of seeing a great many works standing still in the North of England. No doubt if they travelled in tramways they would have the chance of riding along on German rails. He thought the time had come when they should have some alteration in regard to that. It had been said that we were behindhand with regard to technical education, and he believed that was true. He thought it was necessary that we should put a duty of from 10 to 20 per cent. on manufactured articles. That was very little protection, but it was common sense. In advocating such a duty he thought he could hardly be called a violent protectionist. He wished to put this case before the House. Supposing an order had to be placed for steel to the value of £100,000. A bounty-fed manufacturer offered to execute it at £99,000, while an English company, which had furnaces and everything necessary to produce the steel, quoted £100,000. Could it be argued that it would not be in the interests of this country to put a 2 per cent. duty on the bounty-fed stuff? Of course it might be said that the man who bought the steel would lose £1,000, but when they thought that the amount of labour in that large order would be £60,000 it would be seen that greater benefit would result to this country if a 2 per cent. duty were put on, especially if they took into account the fact that rates would be paid by the English order which would not be paid by the foreign order at all. It was said that if people could not find employment in a business which did pay, arrangements should be made for introducing new businesses. Anyone who had been connected with business knew that that argument was absurd, because businesses which had been started in different parts of the country had been started by an immense expenditure of capital, which if it could not be used in the business for which it was intended would be thrown away altogether. Large plants which had cost a great deal of money would have to be sacrificed at scrap price. The owners would be able to get hardly anything at all for it. It was said that the increase in the yield of the income-tax showed how prosperous this country was. It was perfectly true that there had been in Great Britain an increase of about 1 per cent., but in Germany there had been an increase of from 25 to 40 per cent. It should be remembered that a large number of men who had made enormous fortunes in the Colonies came to live in this country. He believed that in the last thirty years the amount of money that had come in from the Colonies had been from a £1,000,000 to £1,500,000,000. He thought that must have had an effect on the income-tax. It was said that this country was the envy of the world. That might be, but our fiscal system was not the envy of the world. At present there was no country willing to adopt our system. When addressing a meeting the other night in the North of England he asked the audience whether they knew of any individual enterprise which was being started in this country at the present time. There was a certain amount of municipal enterprise, and there were a certain number of limited liability companies; but as to individual enterprise, such was never seen as in days gone by. It practically did not exist at the present time. He thought he might say to the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight that a good deal of the business done in the country at the present time was due to Government contracts. The day would come when municipalities would not have the great borrowing powers they had at the present moment, and then it would be found that municipal enterprise would, to a great extent, be curtailed. He admitted that there were many arguments on both sides with reference to the fiscal question.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 9th February, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—Torquay Tramways. The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3120. Finances of Italy for 1903. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

DESTRUCTIVE INSECTS ACT, 1877.

Order, dated 13th October, 1903, revoking the Orders of the Board of Agriculture under the Act, dated respectively 22nd August, 1901, 31st May, 1902, and 5th June, 1902.

COMMONS ACT, 1876.

Reports by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries upon an application for a Provisional Order for the regulation of Oxshott Heath, in the parish of Cobham, in the county of Surrey; Merrow Downs, in the parish of Merrow, in the county of Surrey.

PRIVATE PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons, under Section 2 of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, That, having regard to Section 16 (2) of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, the provisions of the Clyde Valley Electrical Power Order; the Govan Burgh (Electricity) Order; the Lothians Electric Power Order; and of Part V. of the Kirkcaldy Corporation Order; are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bills and not by Provisional Orders.

That the provisions of the Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall Dock) Order; the Clyde Navigation (Works) Order; and of the Young and Bell's Patents Order; are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bills and not by Provisional Orders.

That, save as aforesaid, the Provisional Orders be allowed to proceed, subject to such recommendations as may be hereafter made with respect to the several orders.

LUNACY COMMISSION.

Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, and the number of patients seen, by the several Commissioners in Lunacy, during the six months ended the 31st December, 1903.

TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT THREE PER CENT. GUARANTEED STOCK.

Treasury Minute, dated 1st November, 1903, guaranteeing the payment of interest and repayment of principal of the Transvaal Government Three per cent. Guaranteed Stock.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at a quarter before Four o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 9th February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Donegal Railway Bill; Norwich Water Bill; Southend Water Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.:—Corbridge Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Acton Improvement Bill; Birkdale Improvement Bill; Carlisle Corporation Bill; Corporation of London (Southwark and other Bridges) Bill; Doncaster Corporation Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Hampton-in-Arden Gas Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Kirkby-in-Ashfield Urban District Gas Bill; Leeds Corporation (Consolidation) Bill; Leyton Urban District Council Bill; Littlestone-on-Sea and District Water Bill; London County Council (General Powers) Bill; Lytham Improvement Bill; Radcliffe Tramways and Improvement Bill; Reading Corporation Bill; Selby Urban District Council Bill; Sheffield, Laughton, and Maltby Railway Bill; Skipton Water and Improvement Bill; Soothill Nether Urban District Tramways Bill; Swindon Corporation Bill; Thames River Steamboat Service Bill; Thurles Urban District Council Water Bill; Tottenham Improvement Bill; Wolverhampton Corporation Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill, To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Dumbarton Tramways, ordered to be brought in by The Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Dumbarton Tramways," presented accordingly; and ordered to be considered upon Thursday.

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating ot Kilmarnock Corporation, ordered to be brought in by The Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Kilmarnock Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Kilmarnock Corporation," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 17th February, and to be printed. [Bill 43.]

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Weston-super-Mare; Perth (two); Ryton on Tyne; Craghead; Chester le Street; Blaydon; Springwell; Swalwell; Bristol (two) Wellingborough; Moeladda; Airdrie; Dewsbury; Uppermill; Lanark; Falkirk; Clifton; Woolwich; Lumley; Pendleton; Penygraig; Beddgelert; Capel Uchaf; Llancelhaian; Brynrhos; Bettws Garn; Carmel; Baladeulyn; Bwlan; Canterbury (two); Hylton Colliery; St Ives; Salford; Eccles (two); Acton; Broad Chalke; Rochdale; Woodfalls; Hull; Gillingham; Chipping Sodbury; Urmston; Waterside; Port Isaac; Delabole; Moorside; Harrow Green; Wanstead; Dalkeith; Penygroes; Chelsea; Sowerby Bridge; Luddenden; Penicuik; Liverpool; Abergorlech; Hill Top; West Calder; Loanhead; Lancaster; Stanford le Hope; Barnstaple; Dyffryn; Ore; Nelson; Padiham; Runcorn; East Holywell; Appledore; Pegswood; Talybont; Winsford; Farnworth; Birkenhead; Leith (two); Tow Law; Crook; New Mills; Bucksburn; Coppenhall; Canonbury; Driffield; Stanford le Hope; Nelson (two); to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Clitheroe, in favour, to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT THREE PER CENT. GUARANTEED STOCK.

Paper [presented 8th February] to be printed. [No. 39.]

SUMMARY JURISDICTION ACTS.

Copy presented, of Rule, dated 30th December, 1903, made by the Lord Chancellor, under Section 29 of The Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, as to the taking of recognisances by the Governor of a Prison [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Copy presented, of Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, that they are of opinion that the Clyde Valley Electrical Power Order; the Govan Burgh (Electricity) Order; the Lothians Electric Power Order; Part V. of the Kirkcaldy Corporation Order; the Clyde Navigation (Shieldhall Dock) Order; the Clyde Navigation (Works) Order; and the Young and Bell's Patents Order ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 40.]

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).

Copy presented, of Statement of the Amounts due by the Public to Depositors on 31st March, 1901, and of the Receipts, Interest, and Disbursements during the year ended 31st March, 1902, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 41.]

COMMONS (INCLOSURE AWARDS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 23rd April, 1903; *Sir John Brunner*]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Bank of England. Copy of all applications made by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England for advances to Government authorised by Parliament, from 5th January, 1903, to 5th January, 1904 [by Act]; to be printed. [No.42.]

2. Inquiry into Charities (County of Wilts.). Further Return, relative thereto [ordered 9th August, 1901; *Mr. Griffith-Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 43.]

LABOURERS' COTTAGES (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing the number of Cottages applied for in every Poor Law Union in Ireland under the latest completed scheme in connection with the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, together with the number of applications for extra half acres to cottages already built under the Acts under said scheme; how many of these applications for Cottages and extra half acres were sanctioned; the amount of expenses connected with such scheme; and in what way applied."—(*Mr. O'Shaughnessy.*)

THIBET (TRADE STATISTICS).

Address for "Return of Statistics relating to trade with Thibet since the date of the signing of the Convention of 1890, giving particulars regarding the quantity, classification, and value of the annual exports from British India to Thibet of (a) non-Indian merchandise; (b) of Indian merchandise; and (c) of exports from Thibet to British India."—(*Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree.*)

COAL EXPORTS, ETC.

Return ordered, "giving, for the year 1903, the export of Coal from each port in the United Kingdom to each Country Abroad, together with summary Statements showing the export of Coal in every period of three months from the principal districts of the United Kingdom to the principal groups of Foreign Countries; and also showing the quantity of Coal shipped at each Port in the United Kingdom for ships' use on Foreign voyages during the like periods (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 111, of Session 1903)."—(*Mr. D. A. Thomas.*)

SUNDERLAND COUNTY BOROUGH (INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES).

Return ordered, "comprising (1) the Reports made to the Charity Commissioners, in the result of an Inquiry held in the county borough of Sunderland into endowments, subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part for the benefit of that county borough, or of any part thereof, together with the Reports on those endowments of the Commissioners for inquiring concerning Charities, 1818 to 1837; (2) a Digest showing whether any, and, if any, what such endowments are recorded in the books of the Charity Commissioners in the county borough; and (3) an Index, alphabetically arranged, of names and places mentioned in the Report."—(*Mr. Griffith-Boscawen.*)

GATESHEAD COUNTY BOROUGH (INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES).

Return ordered, "comprising (1) the Reports made to the Charity Commissioners, in the result of an Inquiry held in the county borough of Gateshead into endowments, subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1894, and appropriated in whole or in part for the benefit of that county borough, or of any part thereof, together with the Reports on those endowments of the Commissioners for inquiring concerning Charities, 1818 to 1837; and (2) a Digest showing whether any, and, if any, what such endowments are recorded in the books of the Charity Commissioners in the county borough; and (3) an Index alphabetically arranged of names and places mentioned in the Report."—(*Mr. Griffith-Boscawen.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Factories in London.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will grant a Return showing the number of factories in each of the four London districts in the years 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, and 1900, and indicating for each year the nature of the industries in each district.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) I am afraid the materials for such a Return are not in the possession of the Factory Department of the Home Office. As the hon. Member is aware, the London Inspection Districts include not only London but a very large area outside (at the present time they include Essex, Surrey, Sussex, Middlesex, Hertfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire); and as the boundaries of the districts have been much altered from time to time any figures that could be given would be of little value for comparative purposes. I shall be happy to refer the hon. Member, if he desires it, to such information as has been published from time to time in Parliamentary Returns upon the subject.

Lady Factory Inspector for the Potteries.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can inform the House at what date it is his intention to establish in the Potteries one of His Majesty's Inspectors of Factories from the women's department, in pursuance of the strong recommendation made by the umpire at the arbitration last year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) I have already taken the steps best calculated, in my opinion, to meet the demands of this case. As I informed the right hon. Baronet last year,† I arranged for special attention to be paid to the Potteries by the lady inspectors; and now by my directions one of them has been selected and given instructions to make the Potteries the centre of her duties for some time, and she is at present stationed there.

Unexpended Balances.

Mr. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state the total amounts in each of the last ten years of the unexpended balances of Votes surrendered into the Exchequer by the various Departments of Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Unexpended Balances of Votes surrendered to the Exchequer on account of the year: 1893–4, £566,374 3s. 0d.; 1894–5, £1,082,179 9s. 1d.; 1895–6, £808,045 3s. 2d.; 1896–7, £764,607 17s. 8d.; 1897–8, £2,120,159 9s. 3d.; 1898–9 £735,473 4s. 10d.; 1899–1900, £1,942,402 14s. 10d.; 1900–1901,

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxvii, 997.

£1,427,905 7s. 11d.; 1901–2, £827,630 4s. 4d.; 1902–3, £1,338,342 5s. 8d.

Operations of Irish Land Act, 1903.

MR. P. A. McHUGH (Leitrim, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state, in terms of years purchase, the price agreed upon by the 3,070 occupiers who have arranged to purchase their holdings under the Irish Land Purchase Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Periodical Reports of the proceedings of the Estates Commissioners will be laid before Parliament in pursuance of Section 23 (14) of the Act of 1903. An examination of the 3,070 agreements already lodged with a view to the tabulation of particulars respecting the terms of purchase in each case would entail an immense amount of labour on the staff of the Commissioners at a time when they are burdened with many onerous duties, and I would deprecate the practice of calling for voluminous interim Returns within so short a period of the date at which the Act came into operation.

Division of Grazing Farm at Island, County Mayo.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether negotiations have been entered into at any time with a landlord of a large grazing farm at Island, near Ballyhaunis, county Mayo, with a view to having it divided in such a way as to enlarge the holdings of those tenants whose holdings adjoin it; and, if so, whether there is any possibility of having a sale effected in the near future.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Negotiations were contemplated by the Congested Districts Board three years ago for the purchase of the Knox Estate, near Ballyhaunis, but they were not proceeded with. I am informed that an application has been received by the Estates Commissioners from Mr. C. E. Crean in respect to a property in the same neighbourhood. The Commissioners will investigate the circumstances with a view to facilitate, if possible, the enlargement of holdings on the property. I am unable to say, at short notice and without further inquiry, whether this property is identical with that to which the Question has reference.

Right of Way on Grazing Farm at Island, County Mayo.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether in view of the fact that the tenants on a small property known as Island, near Ballyhaunis, county Mayo, have been for many years using a passage across a grazing farm in that townland for the purpose of carrying home fuel, that they have been prevented for the past two years by the grazier who now holds it, who was assisted by the constabulary in preventing the people from using this passage, and that there is a dispute about the pathway in question, he will give instructions to the police not to further interfere until the case is disposed of by a Court of law.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The police were not present on the occasions mentioned for the purpose suggested in the Question, but solely for the prevention of a breach of the public peace. This is a duty which it is incumbent upon them to discharge irrespectively of the existence of a dispute between the parties in respect of an alleged right of way.

Irish Police on Duty at Railway Station

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the regulations issued to the police prohibiting them from attending railway stations in Ireland have been observed by the inspectors in charge of that force; and, if not, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into their action, with a view to having the men who discharge no other than railway station duty put to some other work.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The regulations prohibit the attendance of the police at railway stations unless they are specially ordered to be present by reason of the importance of the station, or some emergency necessitating their attendance. For these reasons it would not be possible to give the Return of which notice stands in the name of the hon. Member on to-day's Paper. I am inquiring whether the regulations in this respect have been uniformly observed.

The Return referred to is as follows:—

Return showing the names of railway stations in Ireland that are considered of sufficient importance to necessitate the presence of policemen on duty in or near them; the names of stations in Ireland where arrests were made since the 27th April, 1903; and the names of stations where the station-master was forced to call in the aid of the police to prevent breaches of the peace or capture criminals.

Censorship of Private Correspondence in the Transvaal.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any system of censorship is now being applied in the Transvaal to private letters or telegrams within that district, or as regards the mails and telegraphic service to or from the territory and other parts of South Africa or elsewhere; and, if so, under what authority it is exercised, and who is the official responsible for such censorship.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) No system of censorship exists in the Transvaal. The hon. Member refers possibly to the legislation which formed the subject of a reply by my predecessor to a Question on 29th April last†, and I am making inquiry of the Governor with regard to the proposed amendment of the Ordinance.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

De Beers Mines, Limited.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, out of the money voted for war compensation, the sum of £30,000 has been paid to De Beers Diamond Mines, Limited.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): The sum in question was paid out of sums voted in Army Estimates for 1902–3, in return for services rendered and actual expenditure incurred, and not as war compensation.

MR. WHITLEY: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the sum appears in the accounts of the company as received for war compensation.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: That would be incorrect. It was for services rendered, and was voted by Parliament.

MR. WHITLEY asked what was the nature of the services.

[No answer was returned.]

Army Contracts in Ireland.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that last year it was so arranged that Dublin tailors had not an opportunity of tendering for the supply of uniforms for officers entering the service; and that certain English firms were named and price lists sent out; and whether this arrangement will be altered so as to allow Irish firms the opportunity of tendering for supplies.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Under existing arrangements Irish firms have precisely the same opportunities as those of England, Scotland, and Wales, in submitting price lists for the supply of outfits to officers joining the service. A considerable number of Irish firms have availed themselves of the opportunity and their lists have been duly circulated. A public intimation was also made that any firm wishing at any time to be added to the list should apply for this permission.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): Is it not the fact that commanding officers in Ireland are recommending certain English firms.

*MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The Department has no power to influence commanding officers in regard to the advice they give to their officers. They can only supply a list of firms, and in that they include Irish firms.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxi., 786.

MR. NANNETTI: But is my statement true. Do the officers commanding the Connaught Rangers and the Engineers recommend English firms?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Navy Contracts.

Sir JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will explain the reason for the discontinuance of the practice of posting the names of successful tenderers to the Department.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): The posting of the names of successful tenderers to the Admiralty led to inconvenience, and is now unnecessary, as all firms who may have tendered are informed whether their offers have been accepted or declined.

H.M.S "Centurion"—Navy Gun Sights.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether H.M.S. "Centurion" was recently commissioned with some of her guns wrongly sighted; and, if so, what steps have been taken to remedy the defects.

MR. PRETYMAN: All the "Centurion's" guns have correct sights. Some difficulty was experienced in fitting the old pattern mountings of the 10-inch guns with duplicate sights of a new design; it is hoped to rectify this shortly. The original sights are still fitted to the guns and are quite accurate.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS: As this matter is of considerable importance, I should like to ask what prospect there is of the sights being adequately corrected within a short time?

MR. PRETYMAN: I cannot say exactly how long it will take. It is a scientific question, but, if the hon. Gentleman will give me notice, I will answer the Question.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is the country to understand that this vessel is going to sea with incorrect sights?

MR. PRETYMAN: No, Sir; the original sights are correct, and are still fitted to the guns. A new pattern sight is fitted in duplicate which is not absolutely correct.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Then are we to understand that the sights that are to be used are incorrect, and that the correct sights are not to be used?

No answer was returned.

Indian Railway Contracts for Germany.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will explain why an order for 800 pairs of wheels and axles for the Indian State Railways was recently given to German makers; will he state the value of the order thus secured by Germany, and what number of British firms competed for the contract; is he aware that the last locomotives made in Germany for service on the Indian Railways were not favourably reported on by the inspectors; and, if so, can he say whether any action has been taken for the purpose of excluding the contractors from future tenders.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The order to which the hon. Member refers was given to a German firm because their tender was considerably lower than that of any English firm, and was, in the opinion of my advisers, very satisfactory in other respects. It would be contrary to the established practice to divulge the price at which the German firm or any other firm tendered. I am not aware that an unfavourable report on the last locomotives made in Germany for Indian Railways has been received; but I may add that the order in question was given by an Indian Railway Company and not by me or by my predecessor in office.

SIR CHARLES McLAREN (Leicestershire, Bosworth): Are the specifications issued to foreign firms the same as those issued to British firms.

MR. BRODRICK: Yes, precisely the same.

SIR THOMAS WRIGHTSON (St. Pancras, E.): Are the workmen paid the same rate of wages?

MR. BRODRICK: That I cannot say.

MR. MACONOCHIE (Aberdeenshire, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the officials of State railways in Germany are prohibited buying material in England?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Convict Labour for Johannesburg Mines.

MR. WHITLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he has any official information that on 19th November last it was stated to the Chamber of Mines in Johannesburg that the Transvaal Government had offered a thousand native convicts for the mines; if so, was the offer accepted, and what is the total number of convicts so employed.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I have received no official information on the subject.

MR. WHITLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman make inquires in South Africa? I can give him information.

MR. LYTTELTON: Yes, Sir.

Australian Immigration Act.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, seeing that by the Australian Immigration Act of 1901, workmen from the United Kingdom proceeding to Australia under a contract to perform manual labour are liable, on landing, to be imprisoned for six months and afterwards deported, he will state whether any correspondence on the subject took place between the Imperial Government and the Governor General of Australia or the Government of the Commonwealth; and, if so, whether he will lay it upon the Table of the House.

*MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir. No correspondence has passed with the Commonwealth Government in regard to the provision referred to in the Australian Immigration Act.

Coal Exports.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will give for the latest period conveniently available the quantities of coal exported at declared values of 5s. and not exceeding 6s., at 6s. and not exceeding 7s., and at 7s. and not exceeding 8s. per ton respectively; and if he has any official information explaining the smaller quantities shipped at values between 6s. and 7s.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): I shall be glad to give the information which the hon. Member asks for. But I am told it will take some time to prepare the figures, and I therefore hope the hon. Member will allow me to communicate with him again as soon as I am in full possession of the facts.

Board of Trade Journal.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade in what proportions the weekly Board of Trade Journal circulates in the United Kingdom, Germany, and other foreign countries respectively.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): Inquiries have been made, but it is not possible to supply the information asked for.

Vehicular Accidents in London.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the number of accidents caused by covered vehicles in the streets of the Metropolis during the year 1903 which have resulted in personal injuries; and will he say how many of such accidents have proved fatal.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): There were, during 1903, 1,425 accidents caused by covered vans in the streets of the Metropolis which resulted in personal injury. Of these accidents twenty-nine proved fatal.

Pottery Trade Rules.

SIR CHARLES McLAREN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the rules relating to the use of lead glazing in heavy pottery have been definitely settled by him, or whether opportunity will be given for the expression of the views of the men and masters engaged in the sanitary ware industry, so that he may consider the effect of these regulations on the foreign export trade in these goods.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I have some doubt as to the classes of earthenware to which the hon. Baronet is referring. If he means those for which rules were recently submitted to arbitration, the rules are settled by award on the Arbitration after full opportunity for a hearing has been given to the masters and men of all the firms affected by the rules who desire it. As regards other branches of the earthenware trade, any representations which may be made to me shall be carefully considered.

Collections for the Relief of the Working Classes.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, having regard to the fact that the letter of the Home Secretary to the Archbishop of Canterbury, dated 11th May, 1842, provided that the money collected in the several parishes at the instance of the clergy for the relief of the working classes in England and Scotland should be paid into the hands of, and be accounted for by, the Bank of England, he will make further inquiry to ascertain how the balance of £12,552 10s. 3d. remaining in June, 1844, when the account was closed, came to be reduced to £4,965 7s. 10d. in 1874; and what has become of this latter sum.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: The hon. Member put a series of Questions to me last year on this subject, and after making all the inquiries I could without obtaining the information necessary for an answer in every detail, I replied to a Question similar to the present one† that I had no power to pursue the matter further. I can only repeat that reply.

Pay of Rural Postmen in Devonshire.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware there are established rural postmen in North Devon who have served their time in the Army and are now receiving wages of 16s. per week, whilst the wages paid to police constables of the third class in the same district amounts to 21s. per week; and, if so, whether, in view of the effect upon recruiting for the Army, he will state what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Yes. I am aware that there are established rural postmen who have served their time in the Army and are now receiving wages of 16s. a week. I am naturally averse to doing anything which might be considered either unfair to ex-soldiers—or detrimental to recruiting —but as the wages of the established postmen generally and of certain other classes of Post Office employees are now being examined by a Committee appointed by my predecessor, I must defer the consideration of any question affecting the rate of pay of these classes until I have received the Report of the Committee.

Postmen's Compassionate Gratuities.

MR. SOARES: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether it is proposed to make any provision in this year's Estimates for grants of compassionate gratuities to unestablished postmen who have been discharged through ill-health; and, if so, of what nature.

LORD STANLEY: It is proposed to make provision in the Estimates for 1904–5 for the grant of small compassionate gratuities, at the discretion of the Postmaster-General, to unestablished officers of the Post Office who retire through ill-health or age with not less than fifteen years service who are in need of assistance, and who are not eligible for any award under the Superannuation Acts. If Parliament sanctions the proposed provision, I shall be enabled to meet numerous cases of hardship for which at present no remedy is available. But in order to avoid disappointment, I must add that I fear it will not be possible to apply the grant to cases of retirement before the 31st March next.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxvii., 1158.

Underground Telegraphic Cables.

Sir JOHN LENG: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will state what progress has been made with the underground telegraphic cables to the North of England and Scotland; and when it is expected they will reach Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, and Aberdeen.

Lord STANLEY: The line of pipes for the underground cable now runs continuously from London to Carlisle, and a section of nineteen miles has also been laid over the Beattock incline in Scotland. By the end of the financial year a double line of pipes will also have been laid from Manchester to Leeds; the permanent cable will be ready for use as far as Warrington, and it may have been possible to draw in temporary cables between Manchester and Leeds. I cannot at present state when the underground cables will reach the places named, but I shall endeavour to expedite their construction.

Cork Post Office.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state what steps, if any, have been taken to improve the heating of the Cork Telegraphic Office since two complaints were made by the staff in the form of petitions to the postmaster.

Lord STANLEY: On receipt of the first petition, steps were at once taken to improve matters, but these unfortunately proved inadequate. A plan has now been suggested to the Board of Public Works for placing radiators in the Instrument Rooms. This, it is hoped, will afford the desired improvement.

Glencar Road Dispute.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the Congested Districts Board sanctioned a grant of £50 towards constructing a road at Glencar, county Kerry, on condition that it was to be maintained by the county council, and that the Local Government Board has since declared it to be illegal to maintain this road at the expense of the ratepayers, he will state what steps he proposes to take to prevent this road returning to its original state, and the consequent loss of public money.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Wyndham, Dover): The auditor disallowed payment of this expenditure on the ground that the road was not a public road within the meaning of the statute. The Local Government Board subsequently remitted the surcharge, on appeal. In order to avoid a similar disallowance hereafter the county council should reconstruct the road so as to bring it within the provisions of Section 55 of the 6 & 7 Will. IV. cap. 116.

Irish Drainage Loans.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the conditions under which tenant purchasers labour in the matter of drainage charges on estates now being offered for sale; and whether, in his amending Bill, he can hold out any hope of so lengthening the period of repayment of these drainage loans as to reduce the present drainage tax within more moderate limits.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Loans for drainage works are authorised by special Acts, and the question of an extension of the period within which such loans are repayable could only be considered in connection with legislation designed to amend these Acts.

Irish Drainage Boards.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any power exists for inquiry into the working and management of drainage boards in Ireland; to what department of State complaints of overcharges and extravagance in expenditure should be directed; and will he indicate to whom such complaints should in the first instance be addressed.

MR. WYNDHAM: In case of neglect to maintain the drainage the Board of Works may intervene either of their own motion or on the complaint of any person aggrieved. Such a complaint should be addressed to the Secretary, Board of Works. If wrongful administration of funds is alleged, an action would lie against the members of the drainage board; or the electors might turn them out at the next election.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: The complaint is against the officials of extravagance in management.

MR. WYNDHAM: Then turn out the board.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To whom can we apply for redress? I will put down another Question.

King-Harman Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if the sale of the King-Harman Estate at Kenagh, county Longford, has been approved by the Estate Commissioners; whether he is aware that Mr. Robert Armstrong, of Kenagh, formerly tenant of Creagh on the estate, has claimed the right to purchase his former holding on the estate; and will he direct the Estate Commissioners to take Mr. Armstrong's case into their consideration in connection with the sale of this property.

MR. WYNDHAM: The proceedings in connection with the sale of this estate to the Estates Commissioners have not yet been concluded. The replies to the remainder of the Question are in the affirmative.

Chinese Labour in the Transvaal.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the undertaking given by the Secretary of State for the Colonies that no final sanction shall be given to the proposed importation of Chinese labour into the Transvaal until the matter has been fully discussed in this House, he can state how soon after the conclusion of the debate on the Address opportunities for discussion will be given.

SIR CHARLES McLAREN: At the same time may I ask the First Lord of the Treasury when an opportunity will be given to the House of expressing an opinion on Chinese labour in the Transvaal Colony.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, I wish to inquire whether the telegram which appears in *The Times* of to-day, dated Pretoria, "In consequence of communications received from the Home Government, the Legislative Council have decided to postpone taking any steps in regard to the importation of native labour," is correct.

*MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir. So far as I know, that postponement must be due to something I am not acquainted with. My belief is that the Ordinance will pass its Third Reading to-day.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I have to ask when the evidence taken before the Labour Commission will be in the hands of Members. Is it accessible, for there appears to be only one copy? Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there is no official copy of the Ordinance to which the House is asked to give approval? The Paper has been printed, but it is not in the hands of Members yet, which indicates the enormous number of alterations made upon it since it was first introduced. The right hon. Gentleman will no doubt give effect to this consideration if he is going to fix a day for the discussion.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I think that the Colonial Secretary had better answer the detailed Question of the right hon. Gentleman.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The evidence has been printed, and four copies of it are in the library of the House of Commons and two copies in the House of Lords. The Ordinance as amended was in the Bluebook, but the Amendments were not actually printed in the same document as the original Ordinance, but we have since then done that. The Ordinance, therefore, now stands, and was in the hands of Members yesterday in its final shape.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In this Paper the last telegram is February 6, from Lord Milner to the right hon. Gentleman, enclosing an innumerable quantity of Amendments which cannot possibly be embodied in any document in the hands of Members.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The right hon. Gentleman says so, but my information is to the contrary.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This document has only now become available to hon. Members in the Vote Office, and it has not yet been circulated. It contains no fewer than five pages of new Amendments sent by Lord Milner, dated 6th February, and the copy of the Ordinance is not official, for it is headed "reconstructed according to the telegrams." Is the House to understand that this is really a fulfilment of the pledge given by the right hon. Gentleman last week that hon. Members should have a full and official copy of the Ordinance as passed by the Transvaal Legislative Council?

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the size and character of the documents in the library, and does he think hon. Members can fairly weigh the evidence contained in them for the purposes of debate in the next two or three days?

*MR. LYTTELTON: The debate is not anticipated until next week. The volume, I admit, is bulky, but the hon. and learned Member has frequently had to deal with more bulky documents in a very much shorter time.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): We are not all lawyers.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I think that the opportunity of dealing with this volume with reasonable brevity will be easy for hon. Members opposite, even if they do not belong to the legal profession. There are two Reports of the Commission, the minority and majority; and practically all the points at issue which are of importance are carefully grouped, and reference is made to the evidence. With the great bulk of the evidence the hon. and learned Gentleman need have no dealings.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: How long will it take hon. Members, four at a time, to have an opportunity of considering this document?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I can make no promise of any other day for the discussion than the opportunity which may be afforded next week.

MAJOR SEELY: May I ask whether the Government propose to give their final sanction to the Ordinance immediately after the discussion on the Address?

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: The right hon. Gentleman speaks of the opportunity which may be afforded next week. May we assume that an opportunity will be given on the Address next week to discuss the question?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: We should very much prefer to have a clean and separate opportunity. That is what we asked for before.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I explained fully to the House three or four days ago that it was in deference to a letter written by the Leader of the Opposition that the unusual course was taken to introduce a suspensory clause in the Ordinance which would have the effect of preventing its coming into operation until the House had an opportunity of discussing the matter. I pointed out the opportunity which would be given to hon. Members to raise whatever Amendments they pleased on the Address; and on behalf of the Government it is not proposed to extend that undertaking any further.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: We never accepted that. The right hon. Gentleman is giving an opportunity which in effect is nothing given by him, because it is something we have in our own hands.

Royal Commission on Trade Disputes.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury how many sittings the Royal Commission on the Law affecting Trade Disputes has held since its appointment; and, when the Report of the Commission is likely to be presented.

*Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS: The Commission has, so far, held only private sittings, but it will meet very shortly to take evidence. It is impossible to say when the Report will be presented.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

The honourable Alban George Henry Gibbs for City of London.

Joseph Dobbie, esquire, Ayr District of Burghs.

NEW BILLS.

SMALL DWELLINGS (ACQUISITION) BILL.

"To amend the provisions of the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899," presented by Sir Thomas Wrightson; supported by Mr. Claude Hay, Mr. Graham, Mr. Peel, Sir Alfred Hickman, Captain Jessel, Mr. Moon, Mr. Pike Pease, Mr. Collings, and Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; to be read a second time upon Friday, 19th February, and to be printed. [Bill 44.]

HIGHWAYS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Highways," presented by Mr. Henry Hobhouse; supported by Sir John Dorington, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, Mr. Bill, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, and Mr. Herbert Lewis; to be read a second time upon Monday, 29th February, and to be printed. [Bill 45.]

ROMAN CATHOLIC DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

"To abolish Disabilities still affecting Roman Catholics in the United Kingdom," presented by Mr. M'Kean; supported by Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. Dillon, Captain Donelan, Lord Edmund Talbot, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Joseph Devlin, Mr. James Hope, and Mr. Clancy; to be read a second time upon Friday, 22nd April, and to be printed. [Bill 46.]

WAGES BOARDS BILL.

"To provide for the establishment of Wages Boards," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. John Burns, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Tennant, and Mr. Trevelyan; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 47.]

WILD BIRDS PROTECTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Wild Birds Protection Acts," presented by Mr. Sydney Buxton; supported by Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Robert Reid, Colonel Lockwood, and Sir Edward Grey; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 48.]

JURY ACTS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Jury Acts in Ireland," presented by Mr. John Campbell; supported by Mr. Clancy, Mr. MacNeill, Mr. Patrick Aloysius McHugh, and Mr. O'Shaughnessy; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 22nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 49.]

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law of Contempt of Court in Ireland," presented by Mr. Sheehy; supported by Mr. Clancy and Mr. Patrick Aloysius M'Hugh; to be read a second time upon Friday, 29th April, and to be printed. [Bill 50.]

IRISH LIGHTS BOARD BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Irish Lights Board," presented by Captain Donelan; supported by Mr. Clancy, Mr. Field, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Doogan, Mr. James O'Connor, and Mr. Nannetti; to be read a second time upon Friday, 6th May, and to be printed. [Bill 51.]

CONSPIRACY (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law of Conspiracy in Ireland," presented by Mr. Doogan; supported by Captain Donelan, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell, Mr. Condon, Mr. Patrick Aloysius McHugh, Mr. Kilbride, and Mr. J. P. Farrell; to be read a second time upon Friday, 11th March, and to be printed. [Bill 52.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (KING'S SPEECH, MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Ordered, "That the proceedings on the Address in Answer to His Majesty's Speech shall, until concluded, have precedence of all other Orders of the Day and of Notices of Motion at all Sittings for which they are set down."—(*Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*)

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

[SIXTH DAY.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign,—*

We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): Mr. Speaker, as regards the Amendment moved by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, in my humble opinion it is necessary to ask ourselves two questions —whether it will be absolutely necessary in this country to continue a policy absolutely different to every country on earth without exception, and what our answer should be to the colonies. I also ask hon. Members of this House whether they consider it possible that it might be in the interests of this country to put a small duty on manufactured goods if it seemed certain that there would be a transference of a large amount of trade from a foreign country to our own. I should just like to mention a point I referred to last night; it was in reference to a question of a very large steel order, an order for steel approximating £100,000. If a bounty fed country quoted £99,000, and an ironmaster in this country, whose works were not working full time, who owns limestone quarries, ironstone mines, blast-furnaces and steel rolling mills quoted £100,000, does it not seem arguably reasonable that it would be wise for us to put 2 per cent. duty on the foreign material and transfer the order to this country? It is not only a question of the loss of that £1,000 to the individual, but it means labour to the extent of between £60,000 and £70,000 remaining in this country, and also means rates to be paid on that order instead of not being paid at all. We have received during the last two or three months in this country a very great array of figures, and last night I mentioned one or two. They were in reference to the income-tax, and I see in the report on the few remarks that I made in *The Times* there is a mistake in reference to these figures. I said that the hon. and learned Member opposite had made reference to the fact that we had increased the amount obtained from income-tax enormously during the last few years, and I think that is something which may be considered gratifying. At the same time the population of this country has increased about 1 per cent. per annum, or 10 per cent. for the last ten years. The income-tax returns showed an increase of about the same. At the same time during the last ten years, the income-tax returns of Germany show an increase of 25 per cent. The great question, however, is the future. Do Members of this House believe we have a serious aspect to look to in the future; are not all our difficulties with regard to foreign competition more likely to be increased in the future than decreased? It has been said many times that we are getting over the difficulties by changing our industries. I pointed out last night the very great difficulties there are with regard to changing industries. I have had the opportunity of mixing with a very large number of business men, and, before I came into this House, I had the opportunity of managing for many years blast furnace works of considerable size; and I can assure this House that the money is practically lost if an industry stops. Of course, hon. Gentlemen opposite say and know there is considerable amount of difference of opinion on this side of the House. It would be a pity if we had lazy uniformity of political opinion, but I think the right hon. Gentleman who leads on the opposite side of the House knows they have not that unanimity on that side.

It was said by my right hon. friend, who made a great speech last night, that protection was for the benefit of the producer at the expense of the consumer. In my opinion, there never was a more false statement made. An hon. Gentleman below me says it was the Government's opinion. I said a moment ago that we did not agree entirely on this side of the House, and I think the hon. Gentleman who mentioned this fact does not agree with his friends on a great many other matters. In regard to the question of benefiting the producer, the leading ironmaster in the North of England, Mr. Hugh Bell, who has written many letters to *The Times*, does not for a moment admit that the benefit will go to the producer. He has often said—I know him personally very well, and respect him—that protection would ruin the iron trade altogether. Therefore, I think the hon. Gentleman below me will agree with me when I say that there is a difference of opinion among many Members who do not agree with me. Lord Rosebery said the other day that protection meant no improvement of methods in this country, but I think his Lordship cannot have taken the trouble to go to the United States or Germany. The right hon. Gentleman opposite who spoke last night, spoke in regard to technical education, and I will admit that Germany is far ahead of us in regard to technique; but, at the same time, I think he will also admit that Germany is far ahead of us in regard to methods; and it is a very simple reason why. The reason is that Germany protects her industries. A great deal has been said during the last few months with regard to dumping. I say dumping has discouraged enterprise in this country. If two men go into partnership, and cannot see a market for the future, they are not likely to spend money in a large way on plant. If they spend a great deal of money over their plant, and put up the best inventions they can find, is it not natural they should wish some security for their market? But if some foreign countries can send goods into their market at a very much lower than cost price, there is not much encouragement for enterprise. I believe the enterprise of individuals—not municipal enterprise—is dying. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Gateshead spoke with regard to the dumping of coal, at Gateshead election, and, asked if he were in favour of it, said yes, because it was in favour of the consumer. I think he would find no other miner in favour of the dumping of coal. Some people do not quite realise the importance of industries of this country to the coal industry. I believe it is true that one small blast furnace uses as much coal as a town of 50,000 inhabitants for household purposes.

Now I should like to say one word with regard to the question of wages. It has been said truly that the average wage of Germany is less than in England, and many men work longer hours, that also is true. But I cannot see that it can be argued that if you give an impetus to industries in this country that wages would fall. It is absolutely certain that they would rise; and it is perfectly certain that some of these industries which are at the present moment receding, would benefit. It is simply a question of supply and demand. It was said two years ago that one-third of the population was on the point of hunger. If that statement is true, anyone who has watched the terrible state of things in many parts of England, and especially in London, will believe me when I say it would not be wonderful at the present time if one-half were on the verge of hunger. We had yesterday a statement with regard to retaliation, and I for one, who am a follower of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, would never be satisfied with a statement such as we had yesterday. It may be there are Members on this side of the House who are satisfied with retaliation as we understand it; but 90 per cent. of the commercial classes of this country are in favour of some fiscal reform of some kind; they are not entirely satisfied with our fiscal system as it is to-day. Among the Conservative and Unionist Party in this country I believe that five out of six are in favour of the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. I do not mean that they are necessarily agreed with every point. I mean that they are anxious that some arrangement should be come to with our colonies. I do not personally believe that the British star is setting, and I do not believe we are descending into a fifth-rate Power, or that all industries are decaying, knowing as I do the enormous volume of our trade. I believe also it is quite impossible that Australia would leave us. Her monetary obligations are so great that it would be impossible for her to leave us if she wished. And at the present time in Australia there is a firm wish to bind us closer together. These views are held by a very large number of Liberals in this country. Lord Rosebery, in a speech at Leeds, said that, on the grounds of commercial interests alone, the question was worthy of consideration by our great commercial community. I do not think anyone can argue against that. I stated last night that the amount of money which came in from the Colonies during the last thirty years and from the Transvaal was between £1,000,000,000 and £1,500,000,000; and I think there are a great many people who do not realise the great possibilities of the Transvaal. A preference of 50 per cent. might give an enormous impetus to hundreds of trades in this country. It is said "What will you get in return?" and I must admit that is a difficult question; but anyone who knows the feeling of the colonies, in Cape Colony, Natal, and the Transvaal, knows this: they will not demand a "*quid pro quo.*

I should just like to say a word or two with regard to the corn tax. I was one who was always opposed to the corn tax. I voted for it because it was a war tax, but when the war was over I refused to vote for it. I went to the then Chancellor of the Exchequer and told him how pleased I was he was going to take it off. But at the present moment I think the question has changed altogether; and I think it is for the interests of this country for us to put a duty of 2s. on foreign corn coming into this country. I think I can give this House a remarkable fact with reference to this. The average taxation and rates on land in this country which grow a quarter of wheat is practically 2s.; and, therefore, at the present time we are giving America an advantage of 2s. a quarter on all corn that comes into this country againt the home producer. Now, in reference to that, of course it will be said that we propose giving a great benefit to Canada, and that is, I believe, absolutely true; and I believe it is in the interests of the country we should do so. I have had a conversation with a Canadian of some experience during the last two days, and I believe honestly there is no question this development will not take place in Canada unless some arrangement of this kind is made; and anyone who listened to the speech the Prime Minister made to the deputation on the 16th May last, will realise what an important thing it is for us to develop Canada, if we can. We know the large area of land there is that could grow corn, and I believe hon. Members opposite who are keen on keeping up the Sinking Fund, must agree that no better plan could be arranged for carrying out such process. Canada has taken an interest in this question for a very long time. I remember when I first had the honour of being elected to this House, I put these proposals of Mr. Chamberlain in my election address; and I received a message of more or less congratulation from a Canadian in regard to that matter, showing how keen Canadians were at that time in reference to it. [An HON. MEMBER laughed.] The hon. Member laughs in regard to that, but I think it rather remarkable that such an interest should be taken in the election of an insignificant Member, and that the trouble should be taken in Canada to read his address. Mr. Gladstone said a long time ago that this question of the corn tax and of the price of bread was not so important as the question of having the money to buy the bread. I believe there is the chance of a very great development in Canada, Australia, and in the Transvaal.

There was one question, however, dealt with very ably last night, and that was the question of Canadian iron. It is a very difficult question. I have watched it for years, and I know, by the amount of bounty, that it will become a very much more serious question in the future. I cannot see that these proposals will make the matter any worse, and it is possible some arrangement may be come to. At the present time the amount of bounty paid to the Canadian producer allows him to send iron into this country at a ridiculously low price, and, if transit were simpler, it could be sent at a price no producer in this country could possibly compete with. The other difficulty is the question of partly manufactured goods. This is a question very difficult to get over, but it is got over by every country in the world except ourselves. It is often said we are going back to protection, to large duties on corn; but we can only go back, I believe, by the will of the people; and I should be surprised to see within the next ten years a duty on corn beyond 2s. per quarter. I think people very rarely realise what a small amount ten per cent. is; if it were altogether paid by the consumer an article, instead of costing say 5s., would cost 5s. 6d.; but I do not think that of necessity we should pay the whole tax. The right hon. Gentleman opposite, speaking of the coal tax some months ago, said the incidence of the coal tax fell upon the miner; but I think in reference to this question he has stated many times that the tax entirely falls on the consumer. These two statements do not seem exactly parallel. The right hon. Gentleman, in moving his Amendment, referred to Mr Cobden. Many of us who have studied, to a certain extent, Mr. Cobden, naturally admire him; but whether hon. Members opposite believe that he was altogether right or not, there is not one man in this country follows him in one point and that is the question of getting rid of our colonies. I am sure there is not a man in the House who would like to get rid of our colonies. I may quote the Psalmist who said "Blessed is the man who has his quiver full of them, for in time of trouble they will speak with the enemy in th gate." I believe that practically all th Members on this side of the House realis the necessity for some alteration in our fiscal system. [MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): No, no.] I can only say the gallant Member cannot have had anything to do with business during the whole course of his career. Whether we shall be successful in regard to the policy I have attempted to advocate to-day I know not. It depends a great deal on the life of one man. I believe the time will come when we shall see some arrangement made with our colonies, and I believe they will be glad when they stretch forth that hand and have it grasped in return. I do not believe that this controversy is trivial, that it is just a little ripple on the sea; I believe it is a great wave washing against the shores of this country which will affect not only our prosperity and the prosperity of our colonies, but the prosperity for generations to come. I thank the House for the kind way in which they have listened to me.

SIR **ROBERT REID** (Dumfries Burghs) said that the hon. Member who had just spoken referred to many matters in which he would not follow him. He thought, however, that the hon. Member represented the real movement for fiscal reform in this country at the present time. It was the hon. Gentleman and those who thought with him who were the real representatives of the agitation which was going on in the country. He did not think that the Government were the real representatives of the movement. They were pursuing a different course. He did not know whether the question would disunite the Party opposite; but it had caused a great deal of confusion not only in the Party opposite but also in the politics of the country generally, for which he thought the Government were blameworthy. The House of Commons was unable to discuss the matter or express an opinion on it, and therefore it was left for the speeches in the country. Those speeches, especially those of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, began in a lower tone and ended in sheer protection. That was a position which the right hon. Gentleman was entitled to take up. He had severed himself from the Government and had become the advocate of the doctrine so long propounded by the right hon. Member for Sleaford and the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield. But he thought it was the duty of the Government to be perfectly frank and explicit to the House on this occasion. It would not be fair for any Government to try and ride two horses at the same time, as some of the Ministers appeared to have been doing during the recess.

The remarkable speech delivered by the President of the Board of Trade on the previous day was a perfectly candid speech although some parts of it were somewhat indefinite, but it was to be observed that when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol gave his interpretation of the contents of the speech there was marked dissent from members of the Treasury Bench to the speech as interpreted by the right hon. Gentleman. The House was, therefore, entitled to ask for information in the course of the debate as to whether or not that speech as interpreted by the right hon. Member for Bristol was the speech of the Government as a Government. That was a very important matter upon which the House ought to know where it stood. They might rely on one thing, and that was that the Government policy excluded any tax on food except for the purposes of revenue [Mr. GERALD BALFOUR assented by nodding his head], and they might rely on this, that the system of free imports was to be continued unless temporary exceptions were made for the purpose of retaliation merely. Were they safe in concluding that the Government as a Government were entirely opposed to protective duties, that was to say, duties the effect of which was to tax the consumer for the benefit of the producer and to keep the home market clear for our own manufacturers. Lastly, could they feel quite confident that, so far as the Government were concerned, they had heard the last of colonial preference. If those questions could be answered in the sense that the right hon. Member for West Bristol thought they were answered by the President of the Board of Trade, the controversy that had raged in the country for the past three or four months might be very much curtailed. It would assume an entirely different complexion, in addition to which a great many interests whose hopes had been raised by expectations expressed by distinguished Gentlemen in the Government would suffer very bitter disappointment. If there was to be no taxation of food the agricultural interest, represented for so long with such consistency by the right hon. Member for Seaford, would lose all interest in the controversy except as British citizens at large. So also would be the case with the manufacturers. Every one knew that there had been a dead set made by many manufacturers in the country to secure protection for themselves, and they had had a foretaste of what would happen if they could obtain a preference for one industry or another. All that would have to be abandoned if the right hon. Member for West Bristol had placed a correct definition on the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. There was likely to be disappointment in other quarters which were more worthy of respect. Appeals had been made in the country, during the recess, to the patriotism of the people, who were asked to make sacrifices for the British Empire, and if colonial preference was to be given up there ceased to be any interest it that. If the interpretation of the right hon. Member for West Bristol was right, what was left? Nothing but the doctrine of retaliation. Retaliation to be used as a purely defensive measure; not for the purposes of obtaining revenue, retaining the home markets, or for the purpose of encouraging industries we had not or keeping those we had, but simply and purely for the purpose of furthering the policy of free trade.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): And also to protect our industries from outrageous treatment on the part of foreign nations.

SIR ROBERT REID said of course he included that. That was all that remained. The Government were pinned to that alone. As to that policy there were two questions he would like to ask in respect to retaliation. First of all it was to be employed really in cases of outrageous treatment of our industries by foreign countries. What was the meaning of unfair competition or outrageous treatment? What did we mean by it? Bounties? Were the bounties given by foreign countries to their manufactures or their exports unfair competition? They had not been told and they did not know; but if the giving of bounties was outrageous treatment how were we going to deal with the case of Canada? Were the Colonies to be allowed to give bounties? Suppose a foreign nation were to make its workmen work for very long hours or for very low wages, or sent us prison-made goods, was that unfair competition? Or suppose they proposed to employ the inferior races, the Chinese for instance, who worked for very low terms and could live on less than what would supply men of our own race, was that unfair competition which would justify retaliation? Again, suppose a foreign country had protective tariffs which would enable cartels or syndicates to be formed, by means of the influence of which on foreign markets they were able to send goods at a price lower than the cost of manufacture in this country, was that unfair competition? That we knew was the case of the cartels of Germany. Would the existence of protective duties out of which by a natural growth these cartels or combinations arose and became dangerous, be considered as outrageous or unfair treatment, justifying the imposition of retaliatory duties? If so, the country would slide imperceptibly into protection, because it would be sufficient to invoke the fact that a foreign country had cheaper labour or protective duties to demand that we should have protection for our home industries. Retaliation was the back door to protection itself, and if the conditions under which retaliatory duties could be imposed were thought out, it would be seen that that was the case.

What was to be the constitutional machinery by which retaliation should be imposed? Were the Government to come to this House, state their case, and ask the sanction of Parliament to the imposition of duties? The President of the Board of Trade had not answered that point, but it really deserved attention. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that Parliament would be required to give its assent to each retaliatory duty, but he would not pledge himself that its assent would be required to every detail. But if a general Act was to be passed authorising the Executive Government, without consulting Parliament, to impose a duty on a particular article, it would be a subversion of the ancient constitutional privileges of Parliament and of the right of the House of Commons to control the taxation and expenditure of the country. There was no more venerable part of the British Constitution than the unfettered right of this House to determine all questions of the taxation of the subject, and he thought the President of the Board of Trade had not treated the question with the gravity which a matter of such moment deserved. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose had indicated that he and others would be ready, in any particular case, to consider a retaliatory measure provided it were shown that there was outrageous treatment, that the reprisals would be effective, and that the reprisals would not do us more harm than good. Members need not have much fear of assenting to that proposition, because, whatever imaginary cases might be cited, he had not yet heard of a concrete case of the kind. Doubtless there were cases of harsh usage. He thought it very hard that high tariffs should be imposed by foreign countries, but, although we might complain, they were entitled to do as they liked just as we were entitled to do as we liked.

One other point: Was Imperial sentiment to be mingled with this question of fiscal reform? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had appealed to his audience to support his policy in order to counteract the centrifugal tendencies of the Colonies; and the Prime Minister had stated that hereafter colonial preference might be a step towards federalising the Empire. The actual facts of the situation should be faced. The Colonies would deal with this question as a matter of business, and not at all as a matter of sentiment. It was true that Canada had granted a preference, but at the Colonial Conference a memorandum was submitted in which her representatives expressed the hope and expectation that there would be a return in the form of preferences in this country. He did not in the least blame them for doing that: it was the duty of the Canadian Ministers to look after the commerce and welfare of Canada, and they did so from their protectionist point of view. But the duty of British Ministers, while they also had Imperial duties cast upon them, was to look after the commerce and welfare of the British people from the free trade point of view—if they were free-traders. If, however, they were not free-traders, let them not try to base their action on the footing of sentiment; let them base it on the ground that protection was a good thing if they thought so. What were the centrifugal tendencies for which this country was being asked to made so great a fiscal change? There might be centrifugal tendencies in South Africa, but they were not due to, nor could they be removed by, fiscal considerations. He believed there were no such tendencies in the rest of the self-governing Colonies except those which arose from distance, and the gradual growth of different types of character, the results of which lay in the impenetrable future. He agreed that more commerce with the Colonies would do good in binding the Empire together, but only if that commerce were so brought about as to be free from jealousies and heartburnings. It was not in the power of the Government to bind the Empire more closely by fiscal means: it must be done by the enterprise of persons engaged in commerce acting by themselves. It was a dangerous delusion to believe that it could be done in any other way, or to imagine that it was a wise policy to mingle sentiment, however lofty, with purely business matters. This Amendment was no doubt a vote of censure, but it was deserved because of the doubtful and conflicting attitudes which Ministers had maintained during the last three or four months, the discordant voices they had used upon this vital question, and the false hopes they had raised in many quarters.

*Mr. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow) said that, so far as he could understand, the right hon. Gentleman who opened the debate was unable to see how retaliatory tariffs would work, or what good they would do. He therefore desired to cite a case and show the remedy. Honolulu belonged to the Americans; no British ship was allowed to land or to take away from there goods or passengers. Did hon. Members opposite still contend that British trade was free? He believed the Americans thought we were very foolish to render ourselves defenceless in the commercial struggle. If, however, we told them that unless they treated us differently in Honolulu we would mete out to them similar treatment in Fiji and elsewhere, they would thoroughly understand that, and either they would give us freedom to trade with Honolulu or we should get the trade from which the Americans would be excluded in our own islands. He knew a man, a stern and firm free-trader, who went on a long tour through America and the Colonies, and came back a strong believer in the scheme of the ex-Colonial Secretary. Travel was a wonderful thing for widening one's views, as actual contact with the outside world had a way of knocking the bottom out of a good many beautiful theoretical ideas. It was a curious fact that nearly all our working men, who were free-traders at home, became ardent protectionists directly they touched colonial soil. Was it not possible that some hon. Members opposite, if they took a tour through America and the Colonies, would also become firm believers in the policy of the ex-Colonial Secretary? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol, in the very fine speech he made last night, appeared to think that we should get such great advantages by the taking off of 2s. a quarter from American wheat. Did it not seem very unfortunate that it did not occur to him before, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, to put a 6s. tax on American wheat. He might then have had the pleasure of taking it off again, and he would have got for Great Britain three times the advantages that taking off 2s. would give. The scheme of the ex-Colonial Secretary appeared to him to be perfectly clear, and to plain people, with only ordinary knowledge of arithmetic, it seemed as if the household expenses of a working man would certainly not be more than they were now, if they were not less. The argument of the right hon. Gentleman that the reduction of the taxes proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham would have little or no effect seemed rather a curious one. Might he not just as well argue, and with more justice, that because 1s. on the colonial as well as the foreign wheat did not increase the price of bread, that 2s. on the foreign wheat and not on the colonial wheat would have no more effect than that. If the right hon. Gentleman argued that a tax on an article put up the price, was it not fair to suppose if a tax was taken off that it would lower the price. Was it fair that even an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer should have it both ways. He was very thankful that after so many years of fiscal helplessness the right hon. Gentleman should at last think it well to try if they could not protect themselves in however small a degree. The right hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House said that his idea of getting our commerce better was by a better industrial system. They could not, however, get through the foreign tariff walls, and even if they trained their hunters to jump very high, they would find that those tariff walls would go higher still. He did not see how any commercial system could possibly get over those walls.

With regard to the Chinese question in South Africa, it seemed to him to be a very simple one. The black men had always been able to work in the mines, and there were not enough of them. They should remember that it took one white man to look after seven Chinese, so that after all the importation of Chinese labour would do something for the white men in South Africa. He remembered well, nearly twenty years ago, staying in the same house with the late Lord Granville, and somehow they got on to the blessings of free trade, and he remembered venturing to advocate something the same as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was advocating now. To judge from the expression of his host and his friends, they appeared to think that he must be an escaped lunatic. At that same hospitable board now the majority of the guests, as well as the host, would most probably be believers in the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham; so that even the believers in free imports must allow that this policy of self-preservation had made great strides in late years. It seemed to him that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House were so afraid of injuring the working classes of this country if they did anything that might help the manufacturing and landowning classes, but they quite forgot that there were foreign manufacturers and foreign landowners, who, with the help of their own working classes, were sucking the life blood, not only out of our landowning and manufacturing classes, but out of our mechanic and labouring classes as well. By their tariff policy they had two markets to our one, and consequently could sell more articles, and therefore make cheaper. In this way they were flooding our only market at home, ruining English manufactures, and taking the wages out of the pockets of British working men. Trades union leaders, too, appeared to be incapable of understanding that their members required protection from foreign manufacturers as well as from those at home. Take the effect of the free importation of broken stones, as stated in the Government Blue-books. In 1902 British labourers lost in wages from the free importation of stones from four countries the sum of £234,000. It was not disputed at the Shropshire Board of Agriculture meeting the other day that land had gone down in value £1,000,000,000, that occupiers' capital had been reduced by £200,000,000, and that about half the working agricultural population had disappeared from the land. Was that good for the country towns, or good for the manhood of the people? As far as farmers were concerned agricultural Members would be quite as safe with the advance guard of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham as they were with the main body under the Prime Minister.

It was hardly possible that under the late Colonial Secretary's scheme the increase in the price of a four pound loaf could be more than one-third of a farthing, so that the Liberals who went round with a big and a little loaf, telling people that if the Unionists got in that their poor little children would starve, were talking something worse than nonsense. It might be smart Party politics to try to humbug the working classes, and prevent them from inquiring into the great fiscal question, but surely it was not playing the game from a patriotic point of view. Even right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House must understand that the working man's weekly household expenses would not be any higher than they were under present conditions. Self-preservation was allowed to be the first law of nature, and was there very much difference between self-preservation and self-protection. A German Socialist Member, speaking a short time ago in the German Parliament, said, "For goodness sake don't irritate the British, or you will help Mr. Chamberlain." A German Minister quite lately refused to settle a commercial affair with Italy because, he said, they must have their hands free till they saw what Great Britain was going to do, and that his opinion was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham would get his way because his policy was undoubtedly the best for the British Empire. In America the other day, at a meeting of the leaders of commerce, it was strongly urged that America ought at once to offer Canada the best possible commercial terms before the patriotism of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had time to bind her commercially to the British Empire for ever. Practically all the rest of the civilised nations believed in preserving their own industries. Were the small and decreasing number of free importers in these islands quite sure that they were the only wise ones. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast." In the policy of the ex-Colonial Secretary there was hope, hope for these islands, hope for the colonies. There was also hope for every working son and daughter of the Empire, hope, and good hope, that old-age pensions might be found for those who had done their work in this country. But there was no hope, none for their policy, except for the lotus eaters, who wanted to sleep, and for the foreign members of the Cobden Club. How was it that these hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the other side could not understand? Was it that their policy was so poor and so stagnant, so unlike what should be the policy of a great progressive Party, that they were afraid to change even after fifty years? Were they so tied hand and foot by fossilised theories of more than half-a-century ago that they would not even allow themselves to try to understand; or could it be that the spirit of the mighty Cobden had heard in some far-off star that his prophecies had been proved to be utterly false, that his policy had been challenged, and that his spirit had come back to hypnotise and mesmerise their judgment, and mesmerising their brains. In conclusion, might he remind them of an ancient prophecy that did come true? Seated under one of England's mighty oaks rested the Chief of the Druids, and to him came Boadicea, Britain's warrior Queen, bleeding from the Roman rods. The Druid, after foretelling the utter ruin and destruction of the Roman empire, prophesied that—

> "Then the progeny that springs
> From the forests of our land,
> Clad with thunder, armed with wings,
> Shall a wider world command,
> Regions Cæsar never knew
> Thy posterity shall sway."

Those regions, that inheritance, was ours to-day, won in bygone years by the courage and endurance of our gallant grandsires. The sons and daughters of Britain in those vast continents had, through their representatives and the ex-Colonial Secretary, asked us whether we could not find a way of uniting the British Empire commercially as well as by ties of sympathy. This might be the last time they would have a chance of deciding it. What would future generations say of the present leaders of the people if they allowed the inhabitants of these islands to lose their great inheritance, frightened by the bogey of the big loaf, and coerced by the pro-Boer and the Little Englander?

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): After the interesting speech to which we have just listened I am sorry that in the flattering tale of hope which the hon. Member has given us he has not left one solitary ray for those who sit on this side of the House. Our doom is already fixed and our end is certain. But I was somewhat pleased to hear somebody standing up for the ex-Colonial Secretary. I felt that after last night the ex-Colonial Secretary had been apparently—I use that word advisedly—deserted by some whom he might have regarded as his friends; and I wondered whether that speech, to which we listened with so much interest, would have been delivered if he had been sitting in his accustomed place, and I wondered still more what the reply would have been, and what criticism he would have passed on that speech. But I would like, before I go more generally into the whole question, to say one word with reference to what I think of the comments of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol upon my right hon. friend the Member for the Montrose Burghs. He took exception to his having refused the suggestion which had been made some few days ago. The right hon. Gentleman complained that we had inexplicably mixed up this Amendment with a question of confidence in the Ministry. Now, who was the cause of that? Who propounded the doctrine last year—or rather who announced the decision that there should be no discussion on this question except in the shape of a vote of censure? We understood the reason perfectly well. If there had been a vote of censure proposed last year before Parliament broke up, if we had had no statistics presented to us, and if the authors of the great change had not announced their rival policies, we should have been challenged at once with the statement that we did not know anything of what they meant to propose, and that we were simply censuring the Government without having a single fact before us on which to justify that censure. But in this session we are in a totally different position. We have had all the statistics, the Board of Trade Report on the celebrated inquiry. We have your two policies, or your policy—I do not know whether to call it in the singular or the plural number. We have had two policies brought before us. We have had Cabinet divisions. We have had the Cabinet broken up, and perhaps I may say in passing that, at all events so far as the House of Commons is concerned, we have had no statement made to us of the reason why so many Cabinet Ministers—four of the first rank and highest ability—have left His Majesty's Government. I have no doubt that omission will be rectified before this debate is over, but whatever may have appeared in the public Press, whatever may have appeared in letters, statements, or speeches, I take it to be undoubted that hitherto the faithfully followed constitutional rule has been that no Cabinet Minister should resign without telling Parliament why he had done so, and also giving an opportunity to justify the reasons which compelled him to resign.

Now irrespective of that, we have had the country, during last autumn, I may say convulsed with an unprecedented controversy. There has been no parallel to this controversy which has so affected every section of the community—I might almost say every man in the land—at all events for two generations. We have had a policy propounded by the Member for West Birmingham, and we have had a policy propounded at different times and under different circumstances by the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol has come to the rescue, and the situation, he says, is a political situation. I do not want to use a phrase which has been used already in this debate, and to say that, it is a paltry manœuvre, but it is a very clever manœuvre. It is a clever manœuvre for the moment to pass over certain essential features which I shall try to show to the House are inseparable from the Government policy in order to secure what the right hon. Gentleman himself characterised as a mere Party division. The right hon. Gentleman, in his speech, after criticising the wording of my right hon. friend's Amendment, admitted that there had been conflicting declarations from His Majesty's Ministers, which, after all, is just the foundation of our complaint against those Ministers. Purged as they have been, they are still not agreed. The right hon. Gentleman went further. He not only admitted that, but he admitted that there were a great many just now who agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham who ought to have followed him into the wilderness and with his self-denial preached the doctrine which he had propounded to the country. Then having clearly shown his complete dissent from all the proceedings and policy which have been propounded in Birmingham and elsewhere, he went through the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, and extracted from that speech several distinct statements. He dealt with the proposals of the Member for West Birmingham as opposed by the President of the Board of Trade item by item. Colonial preference, he said, had been abandoned, taxation of food was dismissed; the 10 per cent. duty was also sent into limbo. The only policy that remained was retaliation, to which the Member for West Bristol himself had never objected. He went so far as to say that the result of the speech which we heard last night was a pledge—a definite pledge—on the if they won at the general election—even if they obtained a majority—they would not be entitled to carry out a policy of colonial preference.

Well, what has all the talk been about? Colonial preference is the foundation of the whole scheme. That has been trumpeted from every platform. That has been advocated by every mode of illustration and every kind of argument. The Empire according to the Birmingham programme is dropping to pieces. We have arrived face to face with a gigantic calamity. The unity of the Empire is being detroyed; and unless it is remedied at once, then that great catastrophe, which was prognosticated a hundred years ago by Cowper, in the poem read by the hon. Member about Boadicea and the Druid under the Oak—that prophecy is about to be fulfilled! But the right hon. Gentleman went a little further. He would not have been quite true to his Party if he had not taken another step; he said that there was another reason, that there was another flag to be waved—something above and beyond all fiscal questions, all commercial questions. He said that he would not, under any circumstances—he swept the whole political horizon—desire to replace His Majesty's Government by the right hon. Gentlemen opposite. [An HON. MEMBER on the MINISTERIAL Benches: Hear, hear!] I am delighted to hear that cheer, but it is rather a cheap sneer under all the circumstances of the case to say that among all the subjects of His Majesty in either House of Parliament there is nobody capable of administering the affairs of the country; nobody who could carry on either its home or domestic policy, and that like a great general—someone at the time of a revolution who was constituted a Dictator—those Gentlemen, Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench, and they alone, can stand between this British Empire and its utter downfall. That, however, we expect; but I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman should so openly and so unqualifiedly have put his Party above his country. Well, it is good Party fighting; that I admit. But I have to say a word on the conclusions at which the right hon. Gentleman has arrived, and upon the history on which those conclusions are based. If we accept what would satisfy him, the assurance of the President of the Board of Trade, as the very last word upon the Government policy, we should confuse our intellects and obliterate all our memories. What were the resignations for? Why did they resign? Three distinguished men who were Members of this House expressed their intention, their willingness, to support a retaliatory policy to which they made no objection. Why did they resign? What did they go out for? I will ask the House to consider a few dates on that transaction, in order that we may show whether there is, or ever has been, any real or substantial difference between the policy of the Prime Minister, as propounded by the President of the Board of Trade, and the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. No information has been given to us in this House, and we must piece it up from the Press, and from what we have picked up from some of the speeches which have been made. The fact seems to be that there was a considerable difference of opinion from the time of the Budget, and the Cabinet was on the point of breaking up in the month of April on the question of free trade and protection. On the last day of last session two documents were placed before the Cabinet. The noble Lord the Member for Ealing, whom I am glad to see in his place, and who I hope will take an early opportunity of addressing the House, said—

> "On the last day of the session the Cabinet met, and we had before us two documents—a pamphlet entitled 'Insular Free Trade,' and another document containing the proposals of the Prime Minister, which he wished officially to put forward in the name of the Government. And"

says the noble Lord—

> "Preferential tariffs and taxation of food were included in that programme."

Last night we were told that that was not the policy of the Government; that it was not in their programme. Well, the noble Lord said that in the discussion they differed. That was natural enough; the Cabinet differed; and they accepted the first pamphlet on "Insular Free Trade." There was nothing to object to in the circulation of that clever and ingenious document—

"But we differed as to the second. The discussion was adjourned, and on the 14th September the discussion was resumed."

Therefore we may gather from that that between the two dates the Cabinet did not meet again to discuss the question. But in the interval an interesting correspondence took place. On 9th September the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham wrote his celebrated letter to the Prime Minister, and it was written in contemplation of the Cabinet that was to take place on the 14th. The right hon. Gentleman with great frankness—for he is always frank—and great clearness, put before the Prime Minister the distinct difficulites which faced him with reference to some parts of his programme and also the policy which he thought the Government should pursue. And then he said—

"Accordingly I suggest."

—Suggestion comes from Birmingham—

"That you should limit the present policy of the Government to the assertion of our freedom in the case of all commercial relations with foreign countries, and that you should agree to my tendering my resignation of my present office to His Majesty, and devoting myself to the work of explaining and popularising both these principles of Imperial unity which my experience has convinced me are essential to our welfare and prosperity."

Well, the Prime Minister did not reply until the 16th. But two ominous Cabinets intervened between these dates. I go back to the statement of the noble Lord. He says that when they met and when the Cabinet was over, at which they were unable to agree—

"The Duke of Devonshire, Mr. Ritchie and Lord Balfour of Burleigh and I met in my room. We fully discussed the situation as we understood it, and we were unanimously of opinion that we had no option but to resign."

Well, those distinguished men did not resign at that time on retaliation. There was something much more serious than that which took them out of the Government. Well the next day they had another meeting and nothing came of that?

"We four met again, and as I was informed there was no change in the situation, I formally sent in my resignation."

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon and the Secretary for Scotland did the same. Then after that break up of the Government—for it was a break up of the Government—on the 16th, and not till then, the Prime Minister answers the letter of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Everybody can see that, as is stated, the reply was a formal one, embodying the results of the conversations which had taken place in the meantime, and nothing new is added. "Agreeing as I do with you," says the Prime Minister, "that the time had come when a change should be made in the fiscal canons by which we should bind ourselves in our dealings with other countries, it seems paradoxical that you should leave the Cabinet at a time when others of my colleagues are leaving it who disagree on the very point in hand. It is astonishing that you, a protectionist, should leave the Cabinet when the free traders have left it! Then," says the Prime Minister, "if there ever has been any difference between us in connection with this matter, it has only been with regard to the practicability of a proposal which would seem to require on the part of the Colonies a limitation in the all-round development of the protective policy, and on the part of this country the establishment of a preference in favour of imported Colonial products. On the first of these requirements I say nothing; but if the second involves, as it certainly does, taxation, however light, upon foodstuffs, I am convinced with you that public opinion is not yet ripe." This, mind you, is a great national policy, involving the destruction of a system which has been in force in this country, accepted by Parliament, by general elections, by popular opinion, and ratified by the unparalleled prosperity which has extended over half a century, and this question is to be dealt with as if it were some trumpery Departmental Bill, which at the end of the session is described as uncontroversial; as if it were a matter for educating the general public to approach without shying. When Sir R. Peel came to the conclusion, in a protectionist Cabinet, that it was in the interests and for the salvation of the country that the protectionist policy should cease, he told his colleagues so, and he had only three men in that Cabinet who supported him. They were Lord Aberdeen, Sir James Graham, and the late Lord Herbert of Lea. The rest of the Cabinet were against him, and they did as Cabinets have done before, I suppose, and will do again—they asked for further time to consider and to inquire. That inquiry went on; a certain interval elapsed, and when the Cabinet met again the numbers had rather changed. A considerable number had come round to Sir R. Peel; but in the end two members of the Cabinet—one of them a Minister of the highest rank, the late Lord Derby—declined to assent to the proposal. What did Sir R. Peel do? He felt at once that he could not propose to Parliament a policy in those circumstances, as he had not the unanimous support of the Cabinet; and he resigned. The Queen sent for Lord John Russell, who tried to form a Cabinet. He found, however, that he was incapable of forming a Government. I think he was about a fortnight in trying to form a Government, and then gave it up in despair, and told the Queen that he could not form a Government. Sir Robert Peel went down to Windsor to resign the seals of his office. The first remark Her Majesty made to him was—

> "I am not going to accept your resignation; I want you to continue in my service."

She told him what had passed between herself and Lord John Russell, with which, to a certain extent, he was acquainted, and when the Queen suggested that he should consult his colleagues, he said he was prepared at once to take upon himself the responsibility of serving the Crown under these circumstances of difficulty, and he asked that he might kiss hands and go back to London as Prime Minister. What did he do when he came back? He called his colleagues together and that very evening he told them he was determined to propose his policy, whether his colleagues went with him or not, and that he should form a Government. That resulted in the resignation of Lord Derby and another member of the Cabinet. That was the way in which a great statesman approached a great controversy of great importance to the country. It showed, first, that he would not attempt to go on with a divided Cabinet, and, secondly, that the Opposition must have some opportunity of showing whether they could carry the reform. If they would not do that, then he was prepared to place the whole of his talents and abilities at the service of the Crown, whether his colleagues agreed with him or not. I think that is a precedent which might have been followed in the present situation. I will now go back to one or two more dates. The noble Lord and the right hon. Gentleman resigned. But what was the position of the Duke of Devonshire at that moment? On 1st October we had the great meeting at Sheffield——

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): "Hear, hear!"

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: Held, most appropriately, in the constituency of the hon. and gallant Member—*Si monumentum quoeris circumspice*. The Duke of Devonshire had been rather doubtful as to his position, still clinging to the possibility of a policy of retaliation and nothing else. But the next morning, when he read the Sheffield speech, he sent in his resignation. It was perfectly clear to him what the position of the Government was. He did not leave them on the ground of that which they now propound as their policy. He left them because he saw clearly and distinctly that that was but the commencement of a policy of protection, and that the Sheffield speech was a mere makeshift for electioneering and Party purposes, and to prevent, as the Prime Minister frankly said in his speech, the breaking-up of the great Unionist Party. I do not find fault with the Leader of that Party, I do not find fault with right hon. Gentlemen opposite, in doing what they could to prevent the breaking-up of their Party. I am one of those who believe that Parliamentary Government means Party Government, and that there is no greater danger and menace to the political system and constitution of this country than the formation of separate groups similar to those which exist in the French Chamber. The right hon. Gentleman did his best to prevent that catastrophe, and no one could find fault with him. But after that the mission began. The missionary went forth, and we had a succession of clever, able speeches, most popular, received with great enthusiasm, in large centres. I am not going to belittle the talents or the abilities of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. But what was the Government doing all this time? Was there any voice ever went forth from them that they differed in any way from his policy, that they dissented from what he was doing? Was there anything even approaching to what the right hon. Gentleman himself said at Bristol, and to what he said last night? On the contrary. Let me recall to the memory of the House what the colleagues of the Prime Minister were doing all this time. Was there a speech made by a colleague of the Prime Minister in which they did not, while, of course, accepting the formula of "freedom of negotiation"—that was the pet phrase then—express one after another their enthusiasm for the proposals of the Member for West Birmingham, and their intention to support them when it was safe to do so? I will say that among the most outspoken and straightforward of those utterances were those of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. What did he say? He said—

> "He had no difficulty or hesitation in stating his own views as a member of the Government. He accepted, endorsed, and followed the policy of the Prime Minister, but he did not pretend for one moment that he did not believe, as he had always believed, that ultimately the policy which Mr. Chamberlain had been advancing with such marvellous ability and such wonderful success would have to be adopted by the people of this country."

[HON. MEMBERS: "Hear, hear!"] Reconcile those cheers with the speech of last night. Let me take another very outspoken member of the Government, the Postmaster-General. He said—

> "Supposing at the next general election Mr. Chamberlain's proposals carried the field? He should be prepared then, as he was now, to follow absolutely and implicitly, in all the general, well-established principles of the Party to which he belonged. But it would probably have to be not as a member of the Government, but as a private Member, because he should have to reserve to himself the right to vote against any part of the proposals."

There was another distinguished Member. I regard him, without excessive compliment, or in any way wishing to flatter, as among the most distinguished members of the present Government—a rising statesman of whom, I think, the House is proud, and for whom we may look forward to a brilliant future. I mean the noble Lord the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs. What does he say?

> "Two distinct"—

an acute intellect the noble Lord has—

> "but not incompatible policies"—

why, the whole speech of the right hon. Gentlemen the Member for West Bristol is blown to the winds if you accept that description—

> "had been put forward by the Government and by Mr. Chamberlain, and Members of Parliament had been compelled to descend from the fence. There could be no doubt that when a general election came, he did not see why it should come for a long time"—

it is a deep-rooted conviction of His Majesty's Ministers that a general election should not come for a long time—

> "Mr. Chamberlain's policy would be completely realised, and that the question which would be put before the electorate would be the question of tariff reform."

I think the noble Lord gave us a still more interesting, what shall I say, relation of his own personal opinion, worthy of note, especially after his interpolation last night about methods and object. The House will remember the implicit, the child-like confidence with which the noble Lord said he did "not ask to see the distant scene, one step enough for him." Last night he said he did not differ from the object, but from the methods. One step enough for him. Yes, but he knew where he was starting from and where he was going to. He knew where that step was to end, that it was to be followed by other steps, and if he did not know that, if he did not mean that, he would not have taken even the first step. The policy was clear and distinct. I do not think any policy has been more clearly put forward in our time, notwithstanding the mystification and muddle with which it has been environed. The Government mean, if they can, to carry out the policy of the Member for West Birmingham. They believe it to be the best policy for the Government, they believe it to be the best policy for the country, and they believe it to be the best policy for the Conservative Party. I do not hear hon. Gentlemen opposite cheering that remark. A wonderful change has come over the scene. The ceaseless cheering with which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has always been greeted in this House and out of it since these proposals were produced is now hushed into silence. Ah, there has been another mission abroad besides the West Birmingham mission. There has been the mission of the by-elections, and I know few sermons that have produced such marvellous results on the convictions, and no doubt on the votes, of hon. Gentleman opposite as that significant writing on the wall.

AN HON. MEMBER: Only one.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: Only one! Twenty-six since the policy was propounded, and of those twenty-six, at the time of the general election, you had a majority of fourteen, and to-day we have a majority of two. That is a sound, straightforward fact not an illustration. And what is the policy of the Conservative Party in the provinces? What is the policy which is attempting to break up the Unionist Party, to capture the organisation of the Unionist Party? Why, to support the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. I doubt whether any Conservative candidate would have a chance in any strong Conservative constituency unless he was prepared to use that shibboleth. Does the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board doubt that?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I did not wish to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. Perhaps I spoke too loudly to my right hon. friend. I was saying to him that the argument of the right hon. Gentleman appeared to be altogether inconsistent with what he had just said. The right hon. Gentleman said a moment ago that a change had come over the spirit of our dream, and that the policy of the Member for Birmingham was very unpopular with our friends. He now says the whole Conservative Party will have nothing but the right hon. Gentleman.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: I am very glad of the interruption. I rather invited it. I never doubted the position of the Conservative Party. I said it was not popular with the country. That is the question which we have still got to settle. That is the one tribunal that you do not want to go to. That is the one thing you are united about beyond all question. When some one attacked Lord Melbourne on the distracted and divided councils of his Ministry and the position they were cutting in Parliament and in the country, and remonstrated with him upon them, he said—

> "There is one question on which we are all united."

He was asked what that was, and he replied—

> "We do not mean to go out."

Passing away from the history of the autumn, I come to what I must call the extraordinary speech of the President of the Board of Trade—a speech which won the vote and secured the approval of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol. The right hon. Gentleman said that the President of the Board of Trade threw overboard the whole policy of the Member for West Birmingham. I do not think he did. He drew a very singular distinction as he went on between his individual opinion and his opinion as a member of the Government. We all respect him, and I have the profoundest respect for him personally and also on account of his talent. But I venture to say that the Minister of Commerce, the Minister of Trade in this country, so long as he holds the office of President of the Board of Trade, is not authorised to express in any shape or form in this House his individual opinion on matters so vitally affecting one trade. He must speak and can speak only as the Minister of Commerce. He was perfectly frank with the House, but when you strip from his statement last night what was the individual opinion to which he did not pledge the Government, and the opinion which he expressed as President of the Board of Trade, you will see there is a very wide distinction. Among the Members of the Government who have expressed their full concurrence, not only with the policy of the Member for West Birmingham, but with the policy of protection, unashamed and naked protection, is the Secretary to the Board of Trade. But where the President of the Board of Trade, as I think, is not entitled to have two separate opinions, one as President and one as an individual, I am quite sure that the Board of Trade ought not to speak with two voices. I am quite sure that the well-understood constitutional discipline of Government in this country does not leave it open to any Minister who is not a responsible member of the Cabinet to differ in this House from the policy of his chief.

I now come to the policy which the right hon. Gentleman put before the House—the policy of power to negotiate. Well, Sir, the Government have got that power; no Act of Parliament is necessary to give it to them. Are the legal advisers of the Crown going to bring in a Bill whereby it is to be enacted that His Majesty's Ministers are to have power to negotiate treaties with foreign countries? No. But you will observe that the point upon which you could not pin the President of the Board of Trade last night, was as to the power of Parliament in this matter. He said, of course, that no taxation should be imposed in this country without the consent of Parliament. That we know pretty well. Then he was asked whether his contention was that the consent of Parliament should be given in each individual case, and he was not at liberty to say—the Cabinet had not determined upon that. What does that amount to? Did it amount to a suggestion that the Crown might negotiate treaties involving taxation? I do not wish to carry that point any further than is fair and just to the right hon. Gentleman, but that point is not cleared up. Some responsible member of the Government must make it clear—some member of the Cabinet who has authority to say—what the Prime Minister really means about the power of Parliament. We have had a precedent quoted over and over again in these debates—the precedent of the French treaty. How was that done? Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Cobden negotiated with the French Government month after month, and all the way through it was understood that these negotiations were to be subject to the decision of Parliament. And what happened? On the first night of that session the representative of the Foreign Minister laid the treaty upon the Table of this House, and then Mr. Gladstone announced that he would take the earliest opportunity of asking the judgment of the House upon it, and that no further step could be taken—he would not bring in his Budget nor deal with taxation in any shape or form—until the House had discussed and sanctioned that Bill. What was the difficulty in doing that? The House, by an enormous majority, expressed their approval of that treaty, and gave the Crown full power to negotiate that specific treaty. The Crown had power to negotiate treaties, but Mr. Gladstone asked the House to sanction that specific arrangement, and the House did so. I am inclined to think there must be something behind—something which it is intended to remove from the purview and power of the House of Commons. So much for retaliation.

My right hon. friend the Member for Berwickshire asked in one of his trenchant speeches during the recess—

> "On whom are you going to retaliate; on what are you going to retaliate; and how are going to retaliate?"

We have not had one line, one syllable, to illumine us on that question. They say, "We want to put down 'dumping.'" You will be very clever if you can put down "dumping," if "dumping" means selling things below their cost price in competition with fair trade. There is a great deal of "dumping" done at home, and so there will be as long as men fail, as long as men have difficulties, as long as they have to go to their bankers, as long as they have to realise their stocks by selling them at far below cost. You cannot put a stop to an Englishman exporting, if he chooses to do so, goods at a less price than it cost him to make them, if he can get a market for them abroad. There is "dumping" which is very beneficial and ought not to be interfered with; there is "dumping" which supplies a large portion of our raw material. While I was in Scotland the other day I met a large manufacturer there, and was talking to him about "dumping." He told me this—

> "I had an order to make some steel tubes for New York—for an American house. I could not tender for those tubes if I bought my steel either in England or in Scotland. I tried Germany and I could not do it there. I tried Sweden, and I could not do it there. As a last resort I tried America itself, and from New York I bought the steel ingots which were exported from New York and sent into Glasgow, and there I made my steel tubes. I employed my men, I employed my capital, and I sent the tubes out to New York and was paid a price which was an ample remuneration to myself."

That shows that "dumping" is not always a very profitable policy, even for those who indulge in it. The result of that "dumping" was to bring back to the United States, in competition with their own manufactures, manufactures that came from this country.

There is another sort of dumping. We have not heard a word about it either from the Member for West Birmingham or from the Government. The Member for West Bristol did make some allusion to it last night. I mean the bounties paid by the Colonies — the bounties paid by Canada on the export of all iron manufactured goods to this country which comply with their conditions. Are our manufacturers to accept that? Is that in the scheme for having a better footing with the Colonies? Are we to accept "dumping" from them without any countervailing duty to meet it? A merchant in Wolverhampton who exports large quantities of goods to the East told me the other day that a complaint was made to him by one of the largest firms with whom he had been doing business for many years that he was not buying from them as he used to do. He said—

> "No, I can buy cheaper elsewhere." He was asked, "Do you get the goods from Germany?" "No I do not." "Then you get them from the United States?" He said, "No, I do not." "If it is not an impertinent question, may I ask where you do get them from?" "Oh, yes; I get them from Canada."

And buying cheaper from Canada he is able to send those goods to other parts of the world. I am not going to argue the right or wrong of any specific case. I want the House to see that this question of retaliation is surrounded with difficulties. I might almost quote Mr. Gladstone's words and say I believe it passes the wit of man to devise any scheme which will meet those difficulties, which will not involve this country in greater difficulties, in greater dangers, and in worse results to our trade. How are you going to retaliate on the United States? They send us about £20,000,000 a year of manufactured goods, and you send £20,000,000 to them, and all the rest is food and raw material. Retaliation to be effective must be based on the taxation of food; there is no help for it. Those who say they are strong opponents of any taxation on food and yet are prepared to accept the undefined, unexplained, and unexplainable theory of retaliation, I think are playing with double-edged tools.

What is the issue before this House? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, with his usual acuteness, desired to put us on to another scent. It was "confidence in the Government"; it was belief in the boundless wisdom of the Government; in the long experience of the Government; in every element that makes up a strong Administration. Upon those grounds we ought not to disturb the present position. My right hon. friend's Amendment is not a censure of the Government. There is not a line of censure of the Government. There is no saying what they ought to have done that they have not done, what they might have done and have not done, what they ought to have done but what they do not propose to do. What does the Amendment say? It says this—

> "We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House"—

This House has a right to have judgment on a question of this kind. This House has a right to express its judgment on a great question of Imperial policy without restraint and without any other Party issue being drawn into it.

> "We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population."

Are you going to vote "No" to that? Does the right hon. Gentleman say "No" to that? The hon Member who has just spoken will say "No," and I have no doubt the Member for Sheffield will say "No," but the House of Commons would not say "No" to that. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol says he must vote against that. What is the next point?

> "This House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being."

I am ready to go to the country on that issue. The man who votes against that Resolution as forming a part of his own judgment or the judgment of the House is committed to the policy of protection. He is committed to the policy of the Prime Minister of reversing, deleting, destroying, the fiscal policy that this country has possessed for the last two generations. That is the issue we challenge; that is the issue we shall take. I, Sir, for one, believing as I do in the gigantic consequences of this disaster; believing as I do in the terrible calamity in which protection would involve our trade, commerce, manufacturers, and the working classes of all shades and descriptions; knowing as I do that there is not a tittle of reliable evidence to show that any of these disasters have resulted from the adoption of free trade—I avow myself an anti-protectionist and a staunch and convinced free-trader.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): The House will have noticed that there is a return on the Benches opposite to the tone which marked them on the first night of the session. It struck me that this tone had rather disappeared after the debate on the War Amendment. It has now come back, and I for one do not regret it, for I think the jubilant tone adopted by the right hon. Gentleman will make our debates more interesting. The right hon. Gentleman incidentally used the phrase "wandering in the wilderness," and he applied it to us. It struck me while he was speaking, that perhaps hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite should not be too confident. I have seen them confident before, and the simile about the wilderness reminds me that the leader who conducted the people to the chosen land was not the leader who actually led them into it. There is another lesson for the rank and file of the Party opposite, which is, that of the vast host who went into the wilderness, a very small number indeed were permitted to do more than look upon the promised land.

Sir, this is a very big subject, and I scarcely know where to begin, and if I may judge from the experience of this debate it may be yet more difficult later on to know where to end. The right hon. Gentleman devoted a large part of the introduction of his speech to an examination of the differences between members of the Cabinet and to the action of the Prime Minister in regard to them. The fact that he thought it necessary to do so is the best proof that the Party opposite made a great mistake in insisting on taking this debate when the Prime Minister could not be present, for no one except the Prime Minister can possibly answer the questions the right hon. Gentleman has raised.

Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman dealt largely with history. He alluded to what took place in Sir Robert Peel's Government, and he thought that we ought to have acted in the same way. But there is one marked distinction. Famine was abroad in the land at the time when Sir Robert Peel was Prime Minister, and he had to take action then and there. We have not as a Government to take any action now, and we do not intend to take any. We are putting a policy before the country, and it will be for the country to decide whether or not they accept it. But, interested as I was in the right hon. Gentleman's history, I was still more interested in the history of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose. He dealt with a period about which there has been much difference of opinion. The right hon. Gentleman brushed aside as absolutely irrelevant the prophecies which Cobden made in regard to this very question. I do not think they are very important, but I do not think they are irrelevant. What were those prophecies? The first was that the change would not injure the agriculture of this country. Does the right hon. Gentleman say that if, in the great meetings of people interested in agriculture which Cobden addressed, he had told them what its effect would be on agriculture that would have had no influence on their minds? Then take the other prophecy, which I think is more important—that every nation in the world would adopt our system in five years. It may be quite true that Cobden did not make that the staple of his speech, but it is to be assumed that since Cobden stated it he believed it, for I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that no one in English politics was ever more candid or straightforward than Cobden. If Cobden believed it, does the right hon. Gentleman or anyone say that it did not influence his mind as to the effect of the policy which he was putting before the country. If Cobden had foreseen that instead of our getting free access to every market in the world, all the great countries would be doing everything in their power to prevent our selling to them, does the right hon. Gentleman say that that would have had no influence on Cobden's mind?

There is another aspect of this question. When my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham gave his version of the history of the Corn Laws Agitation, a howl went up all over the country from those who felt that one of their most cherished superstitions was being taken from them. But what were the statements made by my right hon. friend to which exception was taken? The first was that the Corn Laws agitation was not a working men's agitation, that the working men stood aloof from it. The second was that it was carried entirely by the manufacturing classes. The third was that it was carried by the manufacturing classes largely on account of their selfish interests. If we are told that that is a Birmingham heresy, then at all events Cobden was one of the heretics. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose is a great authority on history, especially the history of this period, and I certainly would not venture to put my opinion against his, least of all in the House of Commons, but when I find that the opinion expressed by the right hon. Gentleman as a politician is controverted by his opinion as a man of letters, I do not hesitate. I take again those three points. The first was that it was not a working men's agitation. The right hon. Gentleman himself says, in his "Life of Cobden," that it was not the working classes in whom Cobden had confidence. More than that, Cobden wrote a letter—which is in the right hon. Gentleman's book—in which he charged the leaders of the working classes with having stood aloof from that movement.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): Why does the hon. Gentleman try to draw a distinction between what I say as a politician and what I have said as a man of letters? There is no difference whatever.

*Mr. BONAR LAW: I certainly understood the right hon. Gentleman in his speech last night to controvert the statement to which I refer.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: Oh, no.

*Mr. BONAR LAW: Well, if he did not others have done so. The next point was that the repeal of the Corn Laws was carried by the manufacturing classes. Again, in the "Life of Cobden" there is a letter in which he distinctly says that that was so. The third point was, that it was carried by the manufacturing classes on account of their own interests. Perhaps the House would like me to read the passage referring to that—

> "I am afraid that most of us entered upon this struggle with the view that we had a distinct class interest in the question, and that we should carry it by a manifestation of our will against the will of other portions of the community."

[Cries of "Go on."] I have not the book with me, but I saw nothing in it to contradict that. There is another sentence in Cobden's letter which is of interest. The right hon. Gentleman addressed an enthusiastic meeting at Manchester; the spirit of Cobden seemed to permeate the atmosphere, but I think if the right hon. Gentleman had chosen to read this letter it would have had a very damping effect on the enthusiasm of his audience. Let me read it—

> "To confess my honest belief I regard a Manchester constituency now that its gross pocket question is settled as a very unsound and unsafe one."

But there is another city of which Cobden spoke in a very different way; of it he said—

> "I have always had the opinion that the social and political state of the town is far more healthy than that of Manchester."

What was that other city? it was the city of Birmingham.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Because Manchester had rejected Mr. Bright, and Birmingham had accepted him.

*MR. BONAR LAW: I think the words I have read go a little farther than a single election. Now I wish to draw another inference from the "Life of Cobden." I am called by the right hon. Gentleman a full fledged protectionist. It is not the first time I have been so named. I remember that in the first debate on this subject I was spoken of not only as a protectionist, but as a Canadian protectionist, which is, I suppose, a very bad species. But if I am a protectionist I say that the word has not now the meaning which was attached to it sixty years ago. My right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol last night gave a definition in which I agree, for it exactly expresses the view which I have always held. He said that those are not protectionists whose aim is to increase the export trade of this country.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.): No, I did not say that.

*MR. BONAR LAW: I alluded to the remark made by my right hon. friend that when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham began he was in favour of increasing our foreign trade, and that now he had ceased to be in favour of it. At all events, whatever may be the opinion of my right hon. friend, I say that as regards this question our aims are exactly the same as the aims of Cobden. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] Yes, our aims are the same, and just as Cobden tried to carry out the policy he believed in, in the way best adapted to the existing conditions of the country at that time, so we are trying to carry out our aims in the best way adapted to the present conditions of the country. [AN HON. MEMBER: Who are we?] I mean His Majesty's Government, and our aim is to increase and not restrict the foreign trade of this country. There is to my mind a great difference between the views held by Cobden and the views which are now put forward in his name. To judge by the speeches made by those who are opposed to any change in our fiscal system, their whole object appears to be that we ought to keep things cheap. Cobden did not say that, for he said deliberately—

> "I do not aim at cheapness at all, but what I aim at is a free interchange of commodities."

He did not say he aimed at cheapness for a very good reason. He was a business man and he knew, as every business man knows now, that the times when prices are lowest are the times when working men are worst off. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Hear, hear!" and OPPOSITION cries of "No, no."] Then I invite hon. Gentlemen opposite to study the Blue-books upon this matter. What is it that makes prices low? It is bad trade. [OPPOSITION cries of "No, no!"] Bad trade makes the prices of all commodities low, and if my hon. friends opposite will study the charts in the Blue-book they will find that invariably when prices are lowest, employment is worst in this country. It is good trade that makes high prices, and if the sole object that we have in view is to have things always cheap, there is nothing easier. To keep prices always low all that is necessary is to keep trade always bad; and to do hon. Gentlemen opposite justice when they have been in power they have generally succeeded in attaining that object. Cobden expressed his view in a parable when he asked his audience to suppose this country to be separated from the rest of the world, not by the ocean but by the River Thames, in the midst of which a powerful demon prevented trade between those on one side who had raw material and those on the other who required that material for manufactures. Cobden laid the demon in his day; but he has risen again. ["Hear, hear," and cries of "Name."] True, he allows the stream of commerce to flow in one direction; he allows buying, but prevents selling. The policy of the Prime Minister is to lay that demon once more, and to give us again free exchange, to make it possible to sell freely as well as to buy freely. We are told there is no need for this: have we not got the most-favoured-nation clause? In the debate on the Sugar Convention I ventured to say that we attached to that clause a superstitious value which it did not possess. We know more about it now, we know so much about it that no hon. Gentleman opposite has ventured to put that argument forward. I shall not therefore say anything more about it at present. But we are told that retaliation is useless, that tariff wars always fail. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick has made himself specially prominent in stating this view. I wonder where he got his information. In recent years there have been three tariff wars, and the most important of these has been between Germany and Russia. In that instance the issue was clear. Russia put on high duties, and Germany, having remonstrated in vain, engaged in a tariff war and got her way. German exports to Russia which between 1880 and 1892 fell from £10,000,000 to £6,000,000 sterling, in the years 1893 to 1901 rose again to £16,000,000. A tariff war is bad, costly, and only to be resorted to in the last extremity, but because a tariff war is costly is no reason why we should stand defenceless before armed nations. An ordinary war is also bad, but we should not therefore do away with our Navy and disband our Army. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose, in a speech delivered in Scotland, said—

> "What would the Colonies have done—what would they do now, without the protection of our Fleets and our Army?"

I am glad the right hon. Gentleman realises the importance of that, and I hope when the time comes when he sits on these Benches, he will not forget the importance of our Army and Navy. I do not think anyone in this country needs to go to foreign countries at all to find what is the value of retaliation. We have had under our own eyes for the last six months an example of exactly what we mean. It is an object lesson so good that if the country could realise what it is, our case would be won from that one lesson alone. Canada gave a preference to this country which Germany resented. She showed that resentment not only by putting higher duties on Canadian imports, but by intimating that if other colonies followed the example of Canada it would be hardly possible to avoid retaliation not only against those colonies but against Great Britain as well. This was at the time when Germany, like the rest of the world, thought we should never use the power we possessed; but things have happened since, South Africa and New Zealand have given commercial preferences to the mother country, but there has been no carrying out of the threat of retaliation by Germany. Germany knows better now, and she has not only refrained from retaliation against the mother country, but she has not even put on retaliatory duties against those colonies.

And now I would like to say a word about a remark which fell from my right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol. I heard the right hon. Gentleman say that he attached no material value to the preference we received from Canada. Now I know something about the trade of Canada, and I beg to protest as a member of His Majesty's Government against that statement, and I say that it is not the view held either by the Government or the people of this country. I wish to point out how that remark of the right hon. Gentleman contrasts with the main part of his speech. The right hon. Gentleman dwelt upon the importance of new foreign markets. How then can he face the chance of losing any outside market we still have? No one can deny that those preferences, although they may not give us as much as we should like, do give us something which is really of value to this country. This Canadian preference at least is worth something. Now what are the facts? In the years 1886 to 1896 our exports into Canada fell from £8,000,000 to £6,000,000, and during the same period exports from Germany to Canada rose to the extent of 300 per cent. ["Hear, hear" and cries of "Give figures."] The rise was from £400,000 to £1,200,000. The whole case was one of percentages. Our exports to Canada rose from £6,000,000 in 1896 to £10,000,000 in 1902. It was true German exports rose in the same period, but while our rise was to the extent of £4,000,000 the German rise was £1,100,000.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): What are the percentages before and after preference?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Perhaps as my hon. friend is alluding to what I said I may venture to state that what I said was this, not that our exports to Canada have not risen under preference,—certainly they did—although the extent to which they did rise was described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham as altogether disappointing—but what I said was that in spite of preference to us the trade between Canada and Germany, Canada and France, and Canada and the United States had risen more in proportion than the trade of the United Kingdom with Canada.

*MR. BONAR LAW: What the right hon. Gentleman says is perfectly true; it is exactly what I said to the House. But what the right hon. Gentlemen omitted to say, and what I pointed out is, that until we got the preference our trade was going down, and that after preference our trade continued to increase. [AN HON. MEMBER: What about the United States?] An hon. Gentleman asks me—What about the United States? Is there anyone in the House who does not know that the imports from the United States are largely raw material. They are imports that we do not want to send and could not send. What we are interested in is manufactured articles, and of these we want to increase the exports. It is ridiculous to have to argue this on the figures. If it is the case that we can compete at all in the Colonies—and 23 per cent. of our exports of manufactured goods are to the self-governing Colonies—it is surely obvious to any business man that the preference given in Canada equal to 10 per cent. on the value of the goods must enable us to compete much more successfully.

You have heard a great deal during the recess about exports and imports. I should like to say a little on that subject. The theory of everyone who is opposed to any change in our fiscal system is that it is imports which are the best test of the prosperity of the trade of a country; that if you look after the imports the exports will take care of themselves. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition elaborated that the other day at Glasgow. He put it in a nutshell. He said that if by any change of policy you stop the imports of a pound's worth of goods from any country, you will at the same time stop the export of a pound's worth of goods to some other country. Well, that is a very beautiful theory. [AN HON. MEMBER: It is a fact.] An hon. Gentleman says it is a fact, but if it is true it should be easy to prove it. I will give the hon. Gentleman an opportunity of proving it later on, but in the meantime I will prove the opposite. You can take any series of years you like, but I shall take the series given in detail in the Blue-book, which, by the way, hon. Gentlemen say proves their case up to the hilt, though they have never attempted to show how it proves it. From 1890 to 1902 our imports of manufactured goods increased to the extent of £50,000,000 sterling; if the theory of the right hon. Gentleman is true, should not our export of manufactured goods have some kind of relation to the increased imports? [Cries of "No."] Then what becomes of the theory? The theory of the right hon. Gentleman really means that the more you buy from foreign countries, in spite of any effort they may make to prevent you selling to them, the more they will buy from you. The fact is that the more we buy from every one of those industrial countries, our competitors, the less, and not the more, they buy from us. The right hon. Member for East Fife, who has made himself the great protagonist of this theory, has put it in another way which is quite as striking and impressive. He said this, and I think they are almost his words. "The excess of the imports over the exports of any country is itself a measure of the trading prosperity of that country."

MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): But not the measure of difference between the exported merchandise and the imported merchandise?

*MR. BONAR LAW: I shall take the total exports in the case I am going to give. If the right hon. Gentleman's theory is true, then the reverse of it, I think he will admit, must be true also. If the excess of imports is a proof of prosperity, then if you can find any country where the exports steadily, regularly, and largely exceed the imports that country must be drifting into bankruptcy. The United States is such a country. For the last six years the total exports of the United States have exceeded the total imports to the extent of more than £100,000,000 sterling a year. If you make allowance for freight, the excess is still nearly £100,000,000. What I ask the right hon. Gentleman, or anyone else who feels competent to answer is—How is that excess paid for? I know of no way except by the transfer of capital from this or some other country to America.

Sir EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): Payment of interest.

*Mr. BONAR LAW: Payment of interest in this case is transfer of capital. I know of no way that the excess is paid for, except by the transfer of capital, but if anyone else has another theory I shall be glad to consider it. What has been the effect of that excess of exports in the case of the United States? The effect has been that the bank rate, and the value of money in America, which used to be enormously higher than with us, has fallen until it is now practically at the same level. I know this is rather dreary, but I must say a word or two from our point of view about exports and imports. So far as I am concerned, at least I am not opposed to the quantity of imports. It is the quality of the imports that we object to. We would like to see more raw material coming in and less manufactured goods. I am not going to give the figures about this, but I will try to put in another way. If this question could really be looked upon not as a Party question — I know that is quite impossible and I do not want to alter it—I think this would almost be admitted. If you take any country whose ideal is to be a great manufacturing and exporting country, and if you find in the case of that country that over any period of years in the last thirty, taking imports first, the percentage of raw material is declining and the percentage of manufactured articles is increasing, and if, turning to exports, you find that the percentage of manufactured goods is diminishing and the percentage of raw material is increasing, and if you find that in every other industrial country in the world the reverse is the case, that is surely an indication that our industry is not in a healthy condition. What are the facts? Let me take the five years 1880 to 1884, and contrast them with the last five years. We find this in the case of imports—the percentage of manufactured goods has risen to the extent of 7 per cent. and raw material has declined in proportion. If you take our whole exports the percentage of manufactured goods has fallen 5 per cent. and raw material has risen 5 per cent.

Mr. ASQUITH: What raw material?

*Mr. BONAR LAW: What I want to point out is that the exact reverse of this has happened in Germany and the United States, and it is not by accident that that has happened. Those countries have used all their power to encourage the import of raw materials and to discourage the import of manufactured articles. They have encouraged the export of manufactured articles and discouraged the export of raw material. We alone of all countries in the world leave that entirely to chance and we are the one country where both in imports and exports, as regards percentages, we are going backwards.

Now I want to refer to a subject which has been jubilantly dealt with by right hon. Gentlemen opposite—the Board of Trade figures for last year. They were greatly delighted with them, and the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition stated that these figures alone knocked down the scaffolding of the case which had been erected. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen went one better than that. He said that anyone who stated in the face of these figures that our trade was not flourishing was capable of anything. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite were all agreed about one thing, namely, that it was not fair to take a single year and draw an inference from it, but apparently that only applies to a year that tells against them. It is quite right to take a single year when it seems to help their argument. I think I shall succeed in showing that it only seems to help their argument. We cannot analyse the figures for last year because we have not the facts, and without complete analysis it is absurd to draw any large inference from them. We do know that simultaneously with the large increase in our foreign trade the percentage of persons unemployed in this country has enormously increased. How do you reconcile those two facts on the theory of the right hon. Gentleman opposite? You connot reconcile them, but I think we can do something towards reconciling them. We say that exports are a better test of prosperity—we do not go further than that—than imports. You will find on an analysis of the figures for the year that the whole of the increased exports took place in the first six months, and, as might naturally have been expected, during those six months there was no falling off in employment. What happened? In the second half of the year the exports did not increase, but the imports increased enormously, and with the increase of imports, and corresponding with it, there was an increase in the number of unemployed.

I want next to say a word as to "dumping." The House will hear a great deal more about the question, and I admit, speaking for myself, that it was "dumping" which first convinced me that some change in our fiscal system was absolutely necessary. What is the effect of "dumping" on our industries? The right hon. Member for West Bristol was right when he said that the issue we are now fighting is the same issue fought last year over the Sugar Convention Act. The effect of bounties on the sugar industry was to bring the West Indies almost to the verge of ruin, not so much on account of price as on account of the uncertainty which the bounties introduced into all the conditions of the industry, and the effect on our manufacturers to-day is exactly the same. Every manufacturer in this country is threatened by a competition which does not depend on natural laws, on cost of production, on supply and demand. It is a competition the extent of which no amount of prudence can foresee, and against which no amount of skill can prevail. The fact is that our manufacturers are paralysed. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] They have not that confidence in their trade which is the spring and the soul of industry, and they are afraid to spend money in improving old works or to build new works. I would like to illustrate this point from the position of the iron and steel trade of this country. The Board of Trade issued last year a paper which gave full details of the production of iron and steel in the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom. I leave the United States out, which has enormous resources in raw material, but what about Germany? Germany has no such advantages; she imports as we do, a large part of the ore used in making steel, and as to coal, which is the basis of the manufacture of steel, she has no advantage over us, for she imports every year a large quantity of coal from us to make the steel which she sends back to us. That is not all. We actually send to Germany every year a considerable quantity of pig-iron which she sends back to us in the shape of finished steel. A few years ago we made the iron and steel for almost the whole of the world. In 1902 we made approximately the same quantity of raw iron as was made in Germany, but in the manufactured article in steel the German production was nearly twice as great as ours.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: They have the cheap ore.

*MR. BONAR LAW: I myself sold to Germany hundreds of thousands of tons of ore which came from our own colonies. It is a fact that we are being left hopelessly behind in that which is regarded in almost every country as the best index of the industrial prosperity of a country. How is that accounted for? I can see in no way except that it is due to the supineness of our manufacturers or to the lower wages which prevail in Germany. The right hon. Member for East Fife says that it is due to some "defect" in our manufacturers. Well, is the right hon. Gentleman quite confident that he is a competent judge. I have been in another place occasionally where I have seen familiar faces from both sides of this House disguised in an unfamiliar way. I have heard them speaking fortunately for us at an unfamiliar length, and when I have heard them droning away as though they would never stop and been told what the fees were which they received for that dreary performance I have said to myself what a splendid profession? What an easy way of making a living. I really know that it is not so. I know that it only seems easy to me because I do not know enough about it to understand the difficulties. Might it not be possible that the right hon. Gentleman is exactly in the same position? Well, I will say this as regards the iron and steel trade that I know all the manufacturers in Scotland and many of them in England; and I do not know one large firm which does not know, generally from observation, everything that is done in their trade in America or in Germany. Our manufacturers have adopted a great many of their methods, and if they have not adopted all of them it is because our manufacturers think the risk greater than the chance of profit. It is not defects of manufacture or lower wages. The ground lies deeper than that. In modern production the thing which tells most in cheapness is quantity produced; and you cannot produce largely unless you have a large market. We have not a large market. Germany has her own market, which she keeps to herself, and she has access to our market. Then in London iron goods are being brought from Germany at a lower rate of freight than it costs to bring them from Scotland. I ask the House to consider what the effect of a policy of retaliation would be on this trade. Either we would obtain better terms from Germany and access to her markets, in which case our market would be increased, or at the worst we would make it difficult for them to obtain access to our market and their market would be decreased. [Cries of "Hear, hear!"] Hon. Members might sneer at that, but manufacturers did not.

Lord HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): Do I understand—I only ask for information—that when these duties have failed in their object they will be permanently kept on?

*Mr. BONAR LAW: That is a question which I at least do not intend to answer—[Laughter]—and hon. Gentlemen cannot expect any other answer from me. The effect of this policy would not only be to stimulate our own manufactures but to handicap our competitors. It would make it difficult for them to produce as cheaply as they do so as to compete with us not only in our own market but in the neutral markets of the world. How does it strike observers from the other point of view? The Finance Minister in Germany lately made a speech in reference to this development of German trade helping the country to tide over a bad year, in which he said that the German exports largely to our markets had made it possible for German manufacturers to keep their works open. There is another question as to dumping. What is the effect on the men who are engaged in industry? Take the case of steel forgings for shipbuilding which come from Germany. Workmen are thrown out of employment, machinery gets out of repair, and even when prices improve the works are not resumed because there is no security that the improvement will last long enough. But does anyone believe that when our productive capacity has been permanently reduced, Germany will continue to send us these goods at below cost price? In the long run we must pay very dearly for having allowed our own productive capacity to be destroyed. [Cries of "Oh, oh!" from the Opposition Benches.] Hon. Gentlemen opposite may sneer at the idea of a monopoly, they did so in connection with the Sugar Bill last year. I know a particular instance where a monopoly exists just now. I admit that it is a very small one. Wire nails are used to a considerable extent in this country. They are made in Germany and the United States. For a long time we got them cheaply because they competed against us, but, having combined, they sell them to the people here at a high price. You can now only buy them wholesale from an individual in London who quotes these nails for the United Kingdom at £7 10s. delivered in London, but the price for Japan is £5 5s. free on board Antwerp. You can verify the facts. There is no doubt about them. The price for Japan is £5 5s. Why? Because the Japanese are making them themselves, and have a duty which makes it necessary to sell them at a low price, or otherwise they could not be sent in. Then what becomes of the theory that the importer always pays the duty? In this case, it is in a sense true. It is the importer that pays the duty, but it is the English importer who pays the Japanese duty. The right hon. Gentleman who spoke last said he always learnt something when he went to Scotland, but I can assure him that he teaches us something also. He is a great believer in this theory that the importer pays the duty. Let me read an extract of what the right hon. Gentleman said in Glasgow. I do not think it will be necessary to make any comment on it.

> "If some happy state of circumstances should arise in Scotland in which some proposition could be made that the 10s. duty per gallon should be retained on all foreign spirits, but that it should not be charged on spirits distilled at home, the price of spirits would not go down. It would remain exactly where it was, but the distillers at home would put the duty into their pockets."

Here is an article the cost of which is about 1s. a gallon, the duty being 11s., and the right hon. Gentleman says that in the case of an article like that the force of competition would not prevent distillers still selling it at 12s. a gallon, even if the duty were removed.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: What I said was that where a revenue duty was levied and no corresponding excise duty was levied to an equivalent amount, that was protection to the native producer, and that he would put the money into his own pocket.

***MR. BONAR LAW**: The right hon. Gentleman's interruption makes no difference to the argument. The favourite doctrine of hon. Gentlemen opposite, on which their whole theory rests, is the doctrine of the transfer of industry. We know that the bringing in of goods below cost price deprives particular men of employment. Hon. Gentlemen say that when a man is turned out of one job he soon gets another. Let us take the tin plate trade. I think it has been cited by the right hon. Gentleman in proof of this theory. The right hon. Gentleman said at Glasgow—

> "Look at this industry. Look how when one door is shut another door opens."

What is the door that is shut, and what is the door that opens? In 1890 the right hon. Gentleman admitted that the tinplate trade received a knock-down blow. But look, said the right hon. Gentleman, how it has crept up again. The right hon. Gentleman must be thankful for very small mercies. In fourteen years the tinplate trade has crept up, but it is not yet up to the level of 1890. But what about the men who were employed in this industry; the men who in 1890 knew how to make tinplates and did not know how to make anything else, were they to stand idle while the trade was creeping up? The right hon. Gentleman says that many of them went to America. That is perfectly true. They had to go to other countries to secure employment denied them at home. Many of them did something else. They joined the great army of casual labourers, which according to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition is constantly on the verge of hunger. I want to put a clear issue on this question of the transfer of industry. Last year we imported iron and steel goods to the value of over £10,000,000 sterling. The President of the Iron and Steel Institute said in Glasgow that there were still works and workmen in this country capable of turning out every ton of that iron and steel, and that if it had been turned out in this country it would represent £5,000,000 in wages. Surely in this case the burthen of proof lies not on us but on the defenders of the present system. The workmen lost all that amount of wages, and will the right hon. Gentleman tell us what they have got in exchange? It is said that dumping cannot last. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife went further. He said that universal experience proved that it could not last, and that it led to discontent in the country that dumped and ultimately to the abolition of protection.

***MR. ASQUITH**: No I did not say that. I said it led to discontent and to a reaction of opinion in the country which dumped which sooner or later would be fatal to protection.

MR. BONAR LAW: I am very sorry I cannot find at the moment the extract from the right hon. Gentleman's speech, but what he has just said is quite good enough for my case. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to give the House any single instance in the world where the dumping of an article has begun and has stopped. There is no such case. Why then does the right hon. Gentleman speak of "universal experience?" He probably means that that is his opinion. Perhaps he means that it will be the experience of the future. But that is prophecy; and, as somebody said, you cannot argue with a prophet, you can only refuse to believe him. I do refuse to believe him. Why should this dumping end? It is impossible to get out of the right hon. Gentleman's mind the idea that because an article is sold below cost price that therefore it is sold at a loss. Nothing of the kind. If the House will bear with me I will show exactly what it is that happens. Suppose there is in America a steel works capable of producing 100 tons of steel per day, and suppose the American demand is only seventy-five tons per day. It costs £5 10s. to make seventy-five tons; but the maker finds that if he makes 100 tons the cost of the whole is reduced about 10s. per ton. What happens? He formerly sold seventy-five tons at £6 per ton, making a profit of 10s., but by making 100 tons, and still selling at £6, he makes a profit of 20s., and has £37 10s. additional profit in the seventy-five tons. He has twenty-five tons left over to dispose of; he sends the twenty-five tons over here, and sells it at £4 a ton, or a pound below cost price, and makes a profit of £12 10s. on the transaction. Who is going to stop that? No one in America suffers in the least in consequence of it. The consumer there does not pay a penny the more. The steel maker makes a profit and, this above all, the workmen get full wages on 100 tons instead of on seventy-five tons. Who suffers? The British steel maker and the British working man. Who is likely to end it—those who gain by it, or those who suffer from it? It never will be ended until we end it.

*Lord GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing): I had not intended to say anything concerning the incidents connected with my resignation. I fully explained those circumstances in a public speech, and I see no good now in reverting to the matter. There was undoubtedly a misunderstanding, but it is one to which I do not now care to allude. I left the Cabinet because I declined to be associated with a movement which then, although it was euphemistically called "fiscal reform," meant in my mind "protection." But even if any misunderstanding which then existed between me and the Prime Minister had been removed, I certainly should never have remained a member of the Government after the speech which the Prime Minister delivered at Sheffield. I felt in a position of considerable difficulty at the commencement of this debate. An Amendment has been moved from the other side which accurately describes, as far as it goes, my views on this fiscal controversy. I may say that I have held during the whole course of my political life principles identical with those contained in the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Montrose, and I have for more than twenty years sat upon that Bench, and for thirty years I have been connected with what, in my belief, may be truly called fiscal reform in India. I have spoken on behalf of the Governments of Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury, and with the absolutely unanimous approval of my colleagues, have laid down principles to regulate Indian fiscal policy identical with those contained in the Amendment moved by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. For me now to turn round and repudiate those principles would not be merely to subordinate my own opinions; it would practically be to make the whole of my past political life, and the policy which, on behalf of the Imperial Government, I have enforced on India, a subterfuge and a fraud. Now, my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade opened his speech by saying that there was nothing in this Amendment if you excluded the first sentence, to which he could not subscribe.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: No. I said I did not think there was anything in the latter part of the Amendment to which free-fooders would not subscribe, and I said there was very little to which I could not subscribe.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: My right hon. friend is reported to have said, "there was little to which he could not subscribe." Now let us see what are the doctrines to which my right hon. friend can with little difficulty subscribe—

> "We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being."

Those are the words to which my right hon. friend says he can without much difficulty subscribe.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, I said there was little in it to which I could not subscribe. [Cries of "What is the little?"] I thought I had explained yesterday that I personally should be glad to see a state of opinion in this country which would allow preferences with a moderate tax on food, and to that opinion I adhere.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I will take my right hon. friend's exact words. The Amendment exactly describes the position of the Unionist Free Food League, and therefore my right hon. friend admits that our position and the principles we hold are such that he has little difficulty in subscribing to them. Now that is a most remarkable admission. It is a great change since—when, I cannot say—but it does mark a distinct departure from the language which hitherto has been used by those who spoke on behalf of the Government. My right hon. friend, having prefaced his observations in this way, then proceeded to make a further series of statements. I must enumerate them because they are so important. The Government policy was not that of protection; it was not that of my right hon. friend the late Secretary for the Colonies; therefore, putting two negatives together, I think an affirmative proposition can be made out. He went on to say that it does not involve the taxation of food, and it is not connected with a 10 per cent. duty on manufactured goods; that nothing was to be done until the next election, and that then a mandate was to be asked for from the people to confirm a power which the Government at the present moment possesses, and that when the country has given this peculiar mandate any proposition made is to be submitted fully to the discussion and control of this House. Well, now, I really ask my right hon. friend, has the whole country been turned upside down, has a state of disquiet and apprehension been spread through every great industry in this country, has an interference with those natural recuperative processes which a great nation like ours can go through after heavy exactions been caused by this agitation, and have so many resignations occurred that ex-Cabinet Ministers are tumbling over one another in search for seats by this gangway and is the end of it all this —that the Government only want confirmation of an inherent power which they possess, which they can make use of, and which I who have seceded from them was the first to make use of in imposing countervailing sugar duties in India? I feel rather ashamed to resort to so hackneyed a quotation, but is it not true, *parturiunt montes nascetur ridiculus mus*? It is, I must say, a triumph for us poor free-fooders. We have been attacked; committees of our own constituents are even trying to hound us out of the representation of the places for which we sit; we are looked upon as renegades and sectaries; and yet the first time there is a discussion in this House that first time we stand triumphant. We have knocked food taxation out of the programme of the Government.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No food taxation was in the Sheffield programme.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No, Sir; but perhaps my right hon. friend will look at the correspondence between the Prime Minister and the late Secretary for the Colonies, and if he will look at that he will see that the pith of the letter is in the postcript, of which this is a fair paraphrase—"I would suggest that for tactical reasons it might be advisable to exclude taxation of food from the Government Party programme."

Therefore, I say, if the right hon. Gentleman will reflect and carry his mind back a little further, I think he will admit that I am accurate in saying that it is the Unionist free-fooders who have prevented the Government from being committed to the taxation of food, with which they now see it is hopeless to persevere. My right hon. friend made a very able speech, and he laid down the proposition that this fiscal controversy was not a contest between free trade and protection. Sir, I manitain that it is a contest between those two principles, and, able as was the speech of my hon. friend the Secretary to the Board of Trade, I wholly deny that protection has changed its character. What does free trade mean? I think I could give a definition of it which nobody will dispute. Free trade means the removal, in the interests of the consumer of legislative restrictions upon the free exchange of commodities. I believe that to be an accurate description of free trade. Protection is the reverse. Protection means the imposition of restrictions for the benefit of certain interests and individuals at the expense of the community. In their conception, in their operation, and in their effect the two principles are absolutely irreconcilable, and I protest, and have all along protested, against the use of the phrase "fiscal reform." What does it mean? In the eyes of a protectionist, is a free trader a fiscal reformer? In the eyes of a free trader, is a protectionist a fiscal reformer? Twice only in my life has there been an attempt to carry a great revolutionary change through this House. One was the attempt of Mr. Gladstone to carry Home Rule for Ireland; and now we have had fiscal proposals made to us which involve a revolution, in my judgment, quite as far-reaching and as dangerous as Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule proposals. Now, suppose at that time the Unionist Party had adopted on the question of the Union the same attitude as they have done on the fiscal controversy. Suppose that the Leader of that Party had said: "It is an entire mistake to assume that this is a question between Home Rule and the maintenance of the Union. Unless any one can say that the system of government in Ireland is perfect and carries with it no future danger, he must be an administrative reformer; and, moreover, recollect that the Union is nearly a hundred years old, and recollect Mr. Pitt; were all Mr. Pitt's prophecies fulfilled in connection with Ireland? The question before the country is administrative reform in Ireland. We will go to the country, and then when we get our mandate it will be quite time to determine whether administrative reform should be in the direction of Home Rule or not." Would not every one have said, and properly said, "It is gross trifling with a serious subject?" I contend, therefore, that the use of the phrase "fiscal reform" in the sense in which it is so constantly used from the Front Bench is a trifling with this grave subject. My right hon. friend last night made one statement which I admit was new to me. He said that the proposal to put a 10 per cent. duty on all manufactures imported from abroad was not a protective tax, but was purely a revenue tax.

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir; my noble friend really misrepresents me. I never made any statement of that kind. What I said was that if the proposals of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham involved the necessity of making good a deficiency caused by the transference of taxation from certain food products to certain other food products, the question of the mode in which that money should be raised was a question of revenue.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I understood him to say that 10 per cent. was a revenue tax. I want just to follow that up. Ever since that 10 per cent. tax has been before the public there has been a hunt after ruined industries, and in every part of the country inducements have been held out that if this 10 per cent. duty was imposed in some way or other industries which were suffering from foreign competition or otherwise languishing might be beneficially affected.

As several speakers, including the last, have expressed a strong opinion in favour of a policy of preferential treatment towards the Colonies, I want just to put before the House what the cost will be upon the consumer of the only scheme before us. My hon. friend who has just spoken referred to the Canadian figures, and he said that there had been a large increase in our exports in recent years. There has been an increase of two or three millions. [Sir H. VINCENT: Double.] No, pardon me; I am too well up in these figures. What happened was this—that the Canadians raised their tariff against us and our imports steadily fell for a long time; then came a Government who reduced the tariff, and our imports at once rose quite independently of any preferential treatment; and since then there has been a very large increase of Canadian exports, and that has naturally corresponded with the increase of our imports into that country. What are we going to get in the way of increased trade by preferential arrangements with the Colonies? So soon as my right hon. friend the late Secretary for the Colonies started his proposals, I, being of a somewhat prosaic character, sent for all the latest statistics relating to the trade of these colonies and the tariffs there in force. The fact is that those colonies have got very little to give us. They are clear and emphatic on this point, that no reduction will be made which will in any degree enable our manufacturers to compete with their native industries. Therefore we start with this—that we shall get no benefit in that direction. All we can get from preferential treatment is the absorption of imports which go to the Colonies from other countries. As a matter of fact the British Empire and the United States have almost a monopoly of the imports into Canada. The same state of things exists as regards Australasia. Out of £42,000,000 imports into Canada £37,000,000 come from the United States and from the British Empire, and the same proportion holds in Australasia. As a considerable amount of these imports come from tropical countries it follows that we cannot, do what we will, absorb the whole of those foreign imports. Therefore the very outside profit we can look forward to is an increase of our trade from preferential treatment of about £7,000,000 a year. Now put against that the cost. It has been calculated that this taxation of food and this 10 per cent. duty, which is part and parcel of a preferential arrangement, will impose upon the consumers of this country a burden of not less than £35,000,000 sterling, and possibly £50,000,000 sterling, a year. Therefore you start with this extraordinary proposal—that in order to increase our trade with the Colonies we are to submit to a burden which at the very outset is seven times as heavy as any problematical expansion of our export trade.

That is not all. My objection to the fiscal reformer is that he takes so narrow a survey of the situation that he is always wearing blinkers. Attention has been directed to the export trade mainly, but our export trade only employs a very small proportion of the labour engaged in this country. It is, I think, about 16 per cent., but the export trade from this country to the Colonies, which alone would be benefited by preferential treatment, only constitutes a small portion of the export trade, and so you come round, if you work it out, to this—that it is proposed to tax the food of 97 per cent. of the working population of this country in order to benefit 3 per cent. Is that business?

I should like to say a word or two upon one part of the British Empire to which no fiscal reformer has yet alluded; and it is somewhat satisfactory to me to find that on this, the second day of this very important debate, the views which I hold on fiscal matters generally, have been endorsed by my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade, and that the opinions which I put forward on my own responsibility as regards India are entirely accepted by the Government, of India. It is the fashion now to sneer at cheapness, and some extraordinary doctrines in reference to it were laid down in that very able speech to which we have just listened from the Secretary to the Board of Trade. I do not pretend to be an authority on any particular trade, but I have had a great deal to do with the cotton trade of Lancashire, which is by far the most powerful and best organised trade in this country, and by far the largest exporting trade. Nearly 25 per cent. of the whole of our exports from this country consists of cotton manufactured goods, and half the exports from this country to India consist of cotton manufactured goods. The export trade of this country to India is in excess of that of all the self-governing Colonies who are likely to benefit under this preferential treatment. I laid down with the approval of my colleagues, the principle that in India there should be no protective duties, and that perfect equality of treatment should prevail between Lancashire cotton goods and the native industries. I received a deputation during last summer composed of leading men in that industry, and they asked me to remove the Customs duties on cotton. I replied that I could not do so, but I undertook that, so long as I was Secretary of State and those Customs duties were in force, the excise duties should also remain. I have been much attacked for attempting to establish this equality of treatment between India and Great Britain; but so long as free trade is the policy of this country and we believe in it, so long is it possible to establish that equality of treatment because it is beneficial to India as well as Great Britain. But the moment you depart and turn round to protection, it will not be possible for my successor to take the position which I have taken; and if protection is to be the policy of this Empire, and if those colonies who choose to establish protective tariffs are to have special favour shown them in tariff arrangements, can you deny to India that which the rest of the British Empire obtains? And if you cannot deny it to India, at once some £20,000,000 of your export trade is more or less in peril.

That is not all. I believe that the great danger to which the trade of this country will in the future be subject is an increase in the cost of production. That is practically the unanimous opinion, so for as I know, of the leading men in the cotton trade. There are enormous exports to the Far East exclusive of India, in which the exported article has to compete with native industries in localities where the raw material is grown and where there is an abundant supply of cheap labour; and they all tell me that although the turnover is large the profit is small, and any legislation or alteration which sends up the price of food or increases the cost of living will in the long run be fatal to the volume of that gigantic trade. Would it not be madness and unqualified folly for us to accept this idea of preferential treatment which has never been worked out, and the effect of which has only been considered in one small portion of the British Empire?

Just let me say one word on a matter which I think is very germane to this discussion. We are constantly told that we are Little Englanders because we object to the increased cost of these proposed schemes. I have been an Imperialist all my life, but I have always held that the extent to which Imperialism can be pushed must be limited by the expenditure which it entails. Our expenditure during the last ten years has increased nearly £50,000,000 sterling, and mainly in connection with the great services which the Government very properly have thought it necessary to bring up to that high state of efficiency to enable them to discharge more adequately Imperial duties. We have recently for Imperial objects fought a war in South Africa, and we have had to borrow enormously. The consequence of the burden of that borrowing is felt directly and indirectly by the taxpayers, because one of the ablest financiers in a masterly analysis of the money conditions of the City shows that, in consequence of the war expenditure and the raising of loans, almost for the first time in the history of man, money was dearer for two consecutive years in London than it was in Paris and Berlin. Think what that means. It means not only that there is additional taxation to pay for the interest on those loans, but every industry and every trade which at all relies upon the loan of money or requires assistance has to pay a higher rate of interest than it paid before. I contend that the two pillars of our gigantic trade, commerce and merchandise are cheap food and cheap money, and, looking at the disadvantages with which we have to contend against foreign nations through longer hours and lower wages, and the far larger proportion of the raw material and food which they can supply and their larger home markets, it seems to me that we should be fools and madmen to throw away one of these great advantages which we have in contending with them—namely, cheap food.

And, Sir, whilst I readily admit that a country can flourish under protection, still I contend that as has been the case here, where a country for fifty years has had the benefit of free imports you cannot convert a system based on free trade into one of protection without a fearful dislocation of business and without inflicting a terrible amount of misery and distress upon those who would never have remained in these islands had it not been for the free import of food. The only practical proposal therefore that the Government adhere to is retaliation. I listened with some alarm to the speech of the Secretary to the Board of Trade as to the very wide interpretation which he gave to this word retaliation. Just let me give an illustration. There has been three great tariff wars in Europe recently. My hon. friend mentioned three but he has picked out the only one which is favourable to his argument, but I am going to take the other two.

*MR. BONAR LAW: If you take Switzerland you get the same result.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No, no, let us go into that. I will first take the case of Italy and France. Italy and France were doing a great business amounting to £30,000,000 a year. Somebody came and said to the Italians, "put up your tariff," a similar appeal was made to the French, and up went the French tariff, and so the war went on for nearly ten years. At the end of that time the two countries had lost at the very owest calculation over £120,000,000 of trade. Peace was then made, and the trade of those countries has never got up to within 50 per cent. of what it was before the war. The same thing happened in Switzerland, only to a less extent, and the figures never reached the total at which they stood before, and why? If my hon. friends on this side of the House attach great importance to preferential treatment let them beware how they hastily rush into retaliation, because so soon as you declare war against another nation—and if we begin a war we must go on with it—as soon as you declare war up goes the tariff against you, and up goes your tariff against it. But it does not put up its tariff against the whole world and therefore it gives to all other countries, while it is fighting you, preferential treatment in its own market. And when the war is over, and you go to your conquered market, you will find it in the occupation of foreigners. I do not agree with my hon. friend that the tariff war between Germany and Russia ended with entire satisfaction to Germany. It was a terrific war. They began with 30 per cent. *ad valorem*, then 50 per cent. and then it went up to 70 per cent., and discontent and hardship was so intense in both countries that both Governments became frightened and had to come to terms, and although Germany has gained more than Russia there has been since that time permanent discontent amongst the Agrarian Party who look back with longing eyes to the high tariffs then imposed. On the other hand in Russia a false impetus was given to a large number of industries which have ever since been almost a source of danger to the Empire. Not only this but the United States and Argentina for the first time got a certain amount of position in the wheat markets of Germany. Therefore, I say, we ought to be very cautious how we hastily embark upon retaliation. I have no objection to it myself as a matter of principle, but my hon. friends behind me who are protectionists very keenly support retaliation, and no doubt an adroit Prime Minister will persuade the House of Commons that in order to extend the area of free trade he must have recourse to protective duties, but when the time comes to take them off what then will happen. If the contest is prolonged for a certain time the vested interests which have grown will become so strong that the Government will hesitate to take them off.

In that most interesting speech of the Secretary to the Board of Trade allusion was made to the enormous development of the United States and German export trade in recent years, and he seemed almost to indicate that we might take a lesson from German methods. Well the export trade may have increased, but it would be interesting to hear the opinion of the consumers inside those lands as to the methods by which that export trade has been developed. After all their methods are the most selfish and unpatriotic that can be well conceived. [A voice, "Not unpatriotic."] Not unpatriotic? What happened. They mercilessly fleeced the home consumer, and, having fleeced the home consumer, out of the profits paid by that unfortunate individual they supplied his foreign competitor with goods cheaper than they could get them themselves. My hon. friend alluded to the enormous amount of cheap German steel that had recently been "dumped" down here for shipbuilding purposes. But I do not think he gave as the result that—unless I am mistaken—almost for the first time the tonnage of English shipbuilding exceeded that of the rest of the world. I quite agree, and I always have felt that this question of "dumping" is a subject that has to be most carefully watched, and I do not believe that if a strong case were made, such as I have been able to make in reference to putting on countervailing duties in India where undoubted by bounty-fed sugar from Ger-nearly crushed a vast national industry, that any Government would have much difficulty in getting the House of Commons to assent to the proposition.

I have detained the House too long, but I have only one thing more to say, and I say it to my hon. friends on this side of the House as well as to the other side. I am very sorry to be in disagreement with the majority of my Party on this question. All who have gone through that process know that however kindly meant the cheers of former opponents may be, they are no consolation for the loss of the esteem of one's old friends, but I rejoice to think that protection is not to be at the next election the Party cry of the Conservative organisation. I am old enough to recollect when I first stood for Parliament what the impression made upon the working classes was in that great contest which resulted in the abolition of the Corn Laws. Protection is a good starter but it is a bad finisher. The moment the flag of protection is raised all those who have failed, and all those who can get anything out of it, at once simultaneously hasten to its flag, but there are vast latent forces and a large number of quiet persons who do not ordinarily take part in our contests who have succeeded on a system of free imports, and who will assert themselves in a way which is very remarkable when the polling day comes; moreover, I speak as an old electioneerer, it is a fatal mistake, however apparently popular your Party may be, to put in the mouths of your opponents arguments which are either unanswerable or are extraordinarily effective with the great mass of the people. For what can an opponent of protection at once say? He says "Do you approve of a system by which a man is returned to Parliament to benefit himself by taxing others." It is a simple, and if you like, a brutal formula, but it is effective in every form or shape, and in view of the fact that few electors can be Members of Parliament and all are taxpayers they feel very much the force of observations of that kind. I believe in a Party system, and I rejoice that the Government are beginning to assert themselves, as I understand, and to make their will felt on this question. The Party system is only workable if the head dictates the policy. The policy should govern the machine and the machine should never be allowed to dictate the policy. The result of the inaction and dilatory tactics employed by the Prime Minister has been, as we all know, that their control and power over the organisations has become less and less, and those organisations have been asserting themselves in a way which I say unhesitatingly will, if it goes on, tend to produce a political disaster in this country. I make every allowance for the difficulties of the situation, and I am prepared to make sacrifices to the organisations on whose efficiency I believe rests the moral and material welfare of our country. That being the feeling which animates these people how much the more must it affect the Prime Minister when he has to deal with controversies such as those which arose last summer. Therefore, I make all allowance for the Prime Minister. I think he was perfectly justified in making use of his rare diplomatic powers, and I can understand that he is justified in using his great powers of diplomacy and *finesse* in this direction. I think he was justified in trenching upon his own personal convictions if he believed that by delay he could keep in efficient working order the organisation in which he is the gifted chief. Those tactics have failed, and I could not help thinking that the clear and manly utterances to which the President of the Board of Trade gave expression last night were an indication that the wiser heads in the Government had come to that view. If in the continuance o this debate other speakers maintain the attitude and endorse the statements made to us by the President of the Board of Trade, we have gained very great concessions. If I can be assured definitely by subsequent speakers that that opposition to a tax on food is based not on tactics, but on principle, and if I am further told that they will have nothing to do with this protective 10 per cent. duty, then I think that the differences between us are very small. If a clear and definite statement to that effect is made, and if the Government policy is brought down to its very small dimensions, and freed of all those excrescences and extravagances which the unauthorised programme tacks on to it, then, although I am in entire accord with every word of the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment, I could not vote against the Government. I have no desire whatever, although I agree with right hon. Gentlemen opposite, to see them oust my friends from that Bench, but what will assuredly oust my friends from that Bench, and what will assuredly bring disaster and ruin upon our great political Party, will be a continuance of the dilatory tactics of the last six months, and, therefore, I do implore them—I hope I will not give any offence to my old friends—to screw up their courage and to put their foot down, and even go further than the President of the Board of Trade, and repudiate protection in all its aspects.

SIR JAMES KITSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Colne Valley,) said he had been for a very long time connected with the iron trade, which had been prominently mentioned in the discussion of the fiscal question, as one of the industries which was threatened. He had completed now nearly fifty years of active service, and, like the Parliamentary Secretary, he had had some experience in the manipulation of steel. He thought that his experience was somewhat more extensive than his hon. friend's. The Parliamentary Secretary had dealt at length with what people had said on the free-trade question; but he ventured to say that Cobden in his wildest dreams never thought that this country would build up its present magnificent condition of manufacture and commerce. The Parliamentary Secretary had wandered into small points about steel in order that he might make large percentages. He would deal with the general figures of the trade with regard to which it was news to him that it was not successful. That, he said, was news to him at the end of a long career, the latter years of which had, to his mind, been the better years of the half century. What the House of Commons had to deal with was the whole tenor and volume of the trade and industry with which he was connected. All branches of the iron and steel exports in 1880 amounted to £32,700,000, and in 1903 they had increased to £55,100,000. If they turned to the returns of the income-tax in the Blue-book, they would find that the assessment of the trade from 1892–7 ranged a little under and a little over £2,000,000; but in 1900 it rose to £3,000,000, 1901 to £5,000,000, and in 1902 this alleged declining and decaying industry was rated at £6,600,000.

*MR. BONAR LAW: I presume the hon. Member is aware that the returns to which he alludes relate only to pig-iron.

SIR JAMES KITSON replied that that was why he was alluding to the point. He was astonished at the smallness of the figure recorded. He wrote to the Board of Trade, and received a letter from Mr. Llewellyn Smith, who said that the figures given under the heading "Iron Works" represented, generally speaking, the profits of that section of the iron trade which was concerned with the smelting of the ore, whether such profits arose from smelting, or smelting carried on conjointly with other industries such as coal mines, etc. Yes; but coal was used in the manufacture of pig-iron. But did not the Parliamentary Secretary see that on this one section of the trade there was a return of £6,600,000. The total figures of the iron trade, estimated by competent authority, indicated that there was a turnover of £150,000,000 annually. He would venture to say that if they were to collect the income-tax returns from this trade, they would find that it was not £6,600,000, but nearly £20,000,000 at which the trade was rated for income-tax. What had been the advance in wages? He took the other day the rate of wages paid in his engine-works forty years ago. For fitters, moulders, pattern makers, smiths, and platers, the average rate of wages in 1860 was 28s. 3d. weekly; and in 1903 it was 37s. 9d., being an advance in the rate of wages of 9s. 6d. weekly. But that was not all. In 1860, the hours given were sixty per week; in 1903 they were fifty-three per week. That was not all—there was the increased purchasing power of money to-day. They were told that these changed conditions were owing in large measure to the action of the trades unions. No doubt the trades unions had been able to force the position; owing to their combination they had been able to obtain a large advance of wages; but that, of course, would have been impossible unless the condition of things and the advance in trade had enabled that trade to pay it. Just in support of his statement that employment had been abundant, and that the iron trade had been active, he would quote from a Government Report which had been circulated recently to both Houses of Parliament on the East Indian Railway. The Director-General of Stores in the India Office reported—

> "That the period covered, viz. three years, 1900, 1901, 1902, was certainly one of the worst that they had experienced for many years in getting prompt delivery of goods. As they were well aware, there had been a great boom in engineering work in this country. Every shop of importance was full of work, and materials were only procurable at the expense of considerable delay."

That he knew from his own experience was a matter of common knowledge. But to-day the iron trade was said to be declining. Last year (1903) the total make of pig-iron was 8,750,000 tons, and that quantity had only been exceeded in one year when it was a little over 9,000,000 tons. The United States, notwithstanding its enormous production, was not giving as much iron per head of the population as this country was producing at this time. The iron and steel trade was a trade which was essentially based on free imports. It was considered by everyone as an indigenous trade; but, as a matter of fact, out of the 21,000,000 tons of iron ore required for this production of pig-iron 7,000,000 tons were brought in from abroad. Where were the Government going to begin? Were they going to place a tax on iron ore? Well, that was raw material, and that, of course, was admitted to be impossible; but he could not help remarking on the patriotism of the Duke of Devonshire in taking the line he had done when his own interest as a great manufacturer of steel, and as the possessor of native ore, would lead him to throw in his lot with the retrograde policy which had been advocated on the other side. Now the question of the manufacturing capacity was very well measured by the quantity of coal which we raised per head of the population. The United States, notwithstanding its enormous output of 263,000,000 tons, only produced 3⅓ tons per head of the population, while the United Kingdom produced 5½ tons per head of the population. He could hear someone say, "Oh, yes, but we export 46,000,000 tons of coal." There were 46,000,000 tons of coal exported, and if that amount was deducted from our production we still had 4½ tons of coal per head of the population for home manufacturing processes. As to the production of pig-iron: in the year 1902 the United Kingdom produced 8,500,000 tons of pig-iron; and the imports of pig-iron were 227,000 tons, and of finished iron and steel expressed in terms of pig-iron, on which the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade laid so great stress, 1,260,000 tons—or a total of 10,000,000 tons. What did we do with these? We exported of pig-iron 1,102,000 tons; of steel and finished iron 2,800,000 tons; machinery, 524,000 tons; wire and tools, 200,000 tons—a total export of 4,626,000 tons—the balance of 5,374,000 tons being retained at home for the use of our shipbuilders, for engineering, machine making, and all the rest of it. This showed a magnificent home trade based on our imports of raw material. A very striking point which he would like to emphasise had reference to the public stores of pig-iron in the United Kingdom which they were constantly referred to. In 1887 there were 2,500,000 tons in store, whereas in 1902, when we had imported all this material, there were only 255,000 tons in store. If it had not been for that importation of pig-iron and raw steel there would have been actually a dearth of materials for our great shipbuilding and engineering establishments and we would not have been able to employ a large amount of high-priced labour. He thought that, in these days, it was vain to imagine that such a policy as had been advocated would not be disastrous to the great constructive trades of the country. It was our interest to get as much raw material as possible on which men who were paid high wages could work, and that our trades should be more widely spread.

Now, whence did this demand for protection arise? He did not deny that some branches of the steel trade had suffered; some had been almost extinguished. But that had been caused by the progress of invention. Steel rails produced by the Bessemer process were much more durable and were ultimately produced at a much cheaper price than under the old process. A Bessemer steel rail had a life three or four times that of an iron rail, and therefore the demand for the latter necessarily fell. Therefore the old puddling furnaces and rolling mills were destroyed. That was very unfortunate for the owners of these mills. The hon. Gentleman the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade had, with his family, greatly to their credit, done something in fostering the adoption of the Bessemer process; and no greater benefit had been conferred upon the world than the introduction of that process. No fewer than 9,000,000 tons of Bessemer steel ingots had been produced in one year in the United States, and he had heard an American gentleman say that the benefits conferred on the United States by the introduction there of the Bessemer process were equivalent to a sum which would have paid off their National Debt. Of course the community at large had benefited although the unfortunate sufferers were those who cried out for protection. Again, the introduction of the open-hearth steel process had destroyed the iron boiler-plate and the iron ship-plate trade; but it had enabled all those magnificent structures, battleships, merchant ships and the like, to be constructed at a capacity and a price which would have otherwise been impossible. He had been speaking only that day to Sir William White, late Chief-Constructor to the Navy, who told him that, but for the invention of the open-hearth process, it would have been impossible to make the constructions we had produced of late years. Although the boiler and ship-plate trade and the puddling furnace trade had been destroyed, the community at large had benefited. Were they going by protective duties to maintain these ancient processes?

A great deal had been said about dumping of steel billets and steel bars from Germany and from America. In 1902 the total amount of unwrought steel introduced into this country was only 280,000 tons, a mere bagatelle compared with the 10,000,000 tons to which he had referred. He would tell the reason why these billets and bars were dumped. The ancient process was to cast the pig-iron from the furnace into the sand. The "pigs" were allowed to grow cold; they were then reheated, melted in the converter, the ingots cast and allowed to grow cold. Then the ingots were reheated and rolled in the mills into bars and billets. The modern method now was, by a very ingenious device, to run out the metal from the blast furnace into a huge ladle, from which it was poured into a great vessel called a mixer, containing perhaps 150 tons, and thence to the converter, from which the ingots were cast. These were carried by an electric crane to the soaking pits and thence to a close chamber, and next picked up, placed in the rolling mill and converted into bars. There was no reheating, the natural heat was conserved, and repeated handling was saved. How was the man who had not got these new devices to compete with the man who had? Were they going by protective duties to foster and maintain the old processes which wasted the great forces of nature? Were these provided for the service of man to be wilfully cast away? Great Britain was not devoid of works where these improved processes were carried on. We were a little behind the rest of the world, but were not quite so slow as we were sometimes represented to be. He was represented in his constituency by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, whom he had met on other neutral occcasions, such as the meetings of the Chamber of Commerce. He had always admired the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman had refused to take a pessimistic view of British commerce. He commended the right hon. Gentleman for that. He, a trader, also refused to adopt the policy of decrying his own wares. He was a member of a great trade, and he refused to discredit it. He believed, with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, that those men who were continually coming to Parliament whining for assistance were mistaken. We must rely on our own energy and on our own resources, and then, he was convinced, we should still continue to be, as in the past, the first commercial nation in the world.

And it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words —But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population ; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir James Kitson.

Mr. RICHARD CAVENDISH (Lancashire, North Lonsdale) said as one of the Members who had consistently supported the Government during the whole period he had been in the House, and who had without hesitation followed the bidding of the Whips, he felt he could not support the Amendment proposed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite without giving the reasons which prompted him to take that step. It might be said that after the speech of the President of the Board of Trade on the previous day it was hardly necessary for a free-trader to give any reason for voting in favour of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. It was not possible, now that this issue had been raised, for any hon. Member to stand aside and not take a decided part on one side or the other. It might be said by some that the speech of the President of the Board of Trade had completely disposed of the allegation that the Government were moving in the direction of a protectionist doctrine. It was true that the right hon. Gentleman had repudiated any idea of protection, and he went on to say that the Government, as a Government, refused to associate themselves with the policy of the right hon. Member for Birmingham. That was a declaration which many hon. Members who were free-traders considered sufficient to enable them to support the Government, but there was one very serious omission from the right hon. Gentleman's speech. The right hon. Gentleman had not dealt with the condition the country had been in during the last four months, and never attempted to explain the attitude of the Government during the recess, from the opening of the right hon. Member for Birmingham's proposals and the present time. Some better explanation of the action of the Government ought to be given than had been vouchsafed. The House ought to know clearly and distinctly if the Government were going to take their part in the crusade against this doctrine of protection. It was impossible to support the Government unless the House heard that they did not propose to maintain a quiescent attitude on the subject, but were prepared to take a public part in destroying this vicious doctrine which had come amongst them. He would not enter into the complicated questions which had been discussed that afternoon by experts from opposite sides of the House, which a layman could not be expected to do, but it was not difficult for a layman to form a true estimate of what was right and what was wrong. Speaking for himself—and he believed a large number of Members who could not be expected to have a great technical knowledge of this subject—he based his opinion on primary operations. What they had to consider was what had been the result of this system of protection when it was in force; what had been the benefits derived from its abolition, and what were likely to be the results if it were reimposed. He was absolutely opposed to any of the protectionist proposals that had been advocated by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, and he was also opposed to the policy of retaliation. Retaliation might not do the country any harm, and it was conceivable that in some cases it might possibly do good, but, having heard the speech of the President of the Board of Trade, did any one believe, if they assented to the proposals of the Government, they would not have imposed upon them in a very short time a complete set of protective tariffs? A retaliatory tariff on one or two articles might do good, but when it was eventually extended to all the articles imported into this country they would be at once brought face to face with protection. If the House once assented to this policy of retaliation it would not be able to withstand protection later on. In this case it was of the highest necessity that they should prevent the thin end of the wedge coming in at all. Holding these views, he did not see how he could conscientiously oppose this Amendment, and he did not see how the Government, if their views had been accurately and justly expressed by the President of the Board of Trade, could conscientiously oppose it. If it were possible to have a clear issue on the merits and demerits of free trade and protection, he was convinced a majority would go into the lobbies in favour of the system under which they now lived.

In July last, in a speech delivered at the Constitutional Club, the Prime Minister distinctly declared that a difference of opinion on the great fiscal problem should not be held to be against Party allegiance; that it should not be for one side to question the loyalty of the other. But that declaration had not been acted up to in the last few months. Those who had adopted the free-trade platform had been held up as disloyal to their Party, to their own constituencies, and their own supporters, and had been subjected to every conceivable kind of annoyance; and determined efforts had been made to get the local organisations to adopt resolutions against them. They ought to have a specific declaration from the Prime Minister and the Government that they were content to abide by what he believed would be their wish if they were really a free-trade Government. The Government ought to extend to the free-traders the same consideration and support as they had extended to the Unionist candidates at the recent by-elections, who, while they advocated their loyalty to the policy of the Prime Minister and the Conservative Party, had stated their willingness, when the time came, to support the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. He felt it was impossible for anyone who believed in the principle of free trade to take the declaration of the Government on free trade and not believe there was some hidden meaning in the background. He did not think it was intended to put them in a better position in the future, and until he had some better explanation from the Government he could not extend his support to them. It was impossible, with the views he held, to support a Government which he believed were taking a wrong course.

Mr. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) said he regretted to find himself in disagreement with an hon. friend with whom he had worked in harmony for many years, but his views did not coincide with those of the hon. Member who had just sat down. He was not a free-trader; on the contrary, to use the picturesque language which had been used in the debate, he was a "whole-hogger," and as he had supported the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in the country, he was not ashamed to support it in this House. The Amendment was divided into two parts, the first referred to the so-called conflicting statements of

Ministers. In a case of this kind he regarded the statements of Ministers as somewhat of the academic order, because Ministers had publicly stated that they did not mean to introduce any change in the fiscal policy during the present Parliament. No doubt fiscal reform would come, but at the present the Government were advocating a policy called retaliation. One would have thought everybody might have agreed on retaliation. Even the Free Food League, he thought, would have supported retaliation, and he was rather surprised to hear that the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken was going to vote in favour of the Amendment and against retaliation on the present occasion. While he accepted retaliation, he accepted it as a stepping-stone and in no other sense, because he did not believe that retaliation alone was a possible policy. He did not understand how there could be retaliation without a general tariff. The manufacturers would never allow a temporary retaliatory or protective duty to be put on some articles which they did not manufacture and not on others which they did manufacture. Besides which, retaliation would not meet the principal evil with which they wished to deal. At the present moment the principal thing with which they had to deal, as was shown by the remarkable speech of the Secretary to the Board of Trade, was not hostile tariffs but dumping, and how was retaliation to deal with dumping, which was the act of a private individual, firm, company, or cartel — whichever it might be called. He, for one, did not see how they were going to retaliate on private enterprise, or on the great evil of dumping. Again, dumping was confined to manufacturers. Did any hon. Member suppose that the agriculturists of this country would allow a system to be adopted which would benefit and temporarily protect a particular manufacturer and which would do nothing for agriculture? He did not believe it. And, lastly, the system of retaliation alone left out of count altogether the colonial position. He knew many people in the country, who, although they were free-traders economically, did not regard this question from an economic point of view, and were prepared to abrogate their free-trade principles on account of the enormous political advantages that would be derived from a preferential tariff between the Colonies and the mother country. Retaliation left out of consideration colonial and Imperial sentiment, and for that reason he did not believe it could be a permanent policy. He emphatically supported the Government so far as they went, because their action on retaliation alone marked a transition from, and a break with, the Cobdenite tradition of the last sixty years. The Prime Minister at Sheffield asked himself the question, "Do you wish to break with the tradition of the last half century," and answered the question emphatically in the affirmative "I do." That was the impression left on his mind after that speech, and he, as a tariff reformer, welcomed the break, and would be glad to think some alteration was to be made in the *laissez faire* attitude that had prevailed in this country for so long.

The second part of the Amendment spoke of the great advantage free trade or free imports had had upon the trade of this country for the last half century, and proceeded to warn them against any alteration in the system. He was prepared to admit that the system of free imports had contributed to some extent to the prosperity of the country; he admitted that there had been an enormous development in our prosperity since the abolition of the Corn Laws. But, in his opinion, supporters of that policy attached an over-rated importance to the fact that that was due entirely to free imports. At the time the Corn Laws were abolished railways were being constructed in this country, gold was being discovered, and we were engaged in building railroads all over the world; steam was being applied to machinery of various kinds in a way in which it had never been applied before, and because there was a large development of trade, it did not follow that *post hoc* was *propter hoc* and that all our prosperity was due to the duties abolished at that time. In 1846, when the present system was introduced, we were the workshop of the world; we had an absolute lead and were ahead of every foreign nation. We had progressed since then, but had not protected nations progressed much more than we? We were no longer the workshop of the world. The proportion of manufactures which we exported as against that which was exported by other countries was far less every year. We were now told that we were prosperous because our exports had increased last year by £7,500,000, but in the case of Germany, a protected country, their exports had been increased in nine months by £12,000,000. So that their exports had increased by £5,000,000 more than ours in three months less. It was absolutely true as years went on that the proportion of British exports, as compared with the exports of the whole world, grew less, and were it not that there had been a large increase in the exports of this country to the Colonies, he did not doubt that they would possibly show a decrease. The increase of the colonial trade had to a large extent concealed for a time the decrease in trade between this country and foreign countries. The Colonies had stepped in at the very moment when foreign nations by a high tariff had been refusing to accept British goods. That was not all. His hon. friend the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, in his extremely able speech, pointed out how the character of our trade had altered for the worse, and how we were exporting more and more raw materia land importing more and more manufactured goods. On the other hand, the imports of raw materials were declining and the imports of manufactured goods from foreign countries were increasing. Was that a good thing for this country? They might be extremely rich, they might have an enormous volume of trade, but they were employing foreign labour instead of English labour, and were sending capital abroad instead of employing it at home.

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose Burghs said he would be told that circumstances had entirely changed since free imports were introduced in 1846. He himself ventured to say that that was absolutely the fact. He was not one of those who went about the country abusing Cobden, and he did not know whether he would be considered as one of those who were unworthy to loose the latchet of Cobden's shoe. He had never held any other opinion of Cobden than that he was an exceedingly patriotic man and that he did what he believed to be the best at the time. He went further and said that he believed that Cobden's policy was not a bad policy at the time it was adopted. Cobden's object was to increase exports by throwing our ports open to raw material and food from abroad, so that the foreigners who sent us these articles should buy our manufactured goods. We were the workshop of the world at that time and did not fear hostile tariffs. Foreigners manufactured so little themselves that they were bound to buy from this country. This country then did not fear dumping because foreigners had nothing to dump. Circumstances had now, however, entirely changed. Foreigners did not see why they should continue to send this country food and raw material and take British manufactures, and they said that they would manufacture themselves. They now not only supplied their own markets but dumped goods on this country, to its great injury. Surely it was a wise policy to look at the effects of the changes which had taken place, and if an alteration in policy were inecessary, then to make it. He could not agree that because Cobden's policy was a good policy fifty years ago it was a good policy at the present time. He had heard a great deal the other day about dumping from an American. They did not call it dumping in America; they called it "making a slaughter market." It was said that dumping was bad for the country that dumped, but it was not necessarily bad if, as his hon. friend had pointed out, it enabled the country to increase its output, and thereby manufacture more cheaply. Then it was said that dumping was good for this country, because goods could be sold more cheaply than would otherwise be the case. If such cheapness were to be permanent it might be good. Did his hon. friend the Member for the Isle of Wight believe that that cheapness would be permanent or that industries were not destroyed by dumping? His hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn said that industries would revive, but what about the *employés* during the period of revival. They would be walking about without work and on the verge of starvation, and would possibly have to emigrate to other countries. Even then what would be the use of their returning, as if dumping recommenced the industry might be again destroyed. Already the glass and chemical industries had been very seriously injured. His hon. friend said that those industries were destroyed by foreign competition, but if goods were sent to this country at less than cost price then it was dumping and nothing else.

MR. MOULTON (Cornwall, Launceston) asked if the hon. Gentleman said that Belgian plate glass was sent into this country at less than cost price?

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said it was impossible across the floor of the House to answer questions about particular industries.

MR. MOULTON said that the profit on the Belgian plate glass industry was derived from exports.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said that if the price were not below cost now it was possibly because the English plate glass industry had been destroyed and that the Belgians held the market. He had heard a great deal about the transferability of labour. A more heartless doctrine had never been pronounced in this House. It caused a vast amount of misery, and if there were any case where it was justifiable for the Government to interfere, it was the case where men were turned out of work by foreign dumping. Even if transferability were possible, a vast amount of suffering was absolutely inevitable. They were told they should have more technical education. Let them suppose that a man was technically educated to be a tinplate maker, and that owing to dumping that industry was temporarily destroyed. What was the use of technical education to such a man, brought up to a particular trade, when his work was taken from him, his trade destroyed, and he was told to seek other employment. He yielded to no hon. Member in his desire to see more technical education in the country, but they should supplement technical education by some means which would enable them to look after their own industries. They had, of course, heard of the old argument of the cheap and the dear loaf, and of the large and the little loaf. He quite agreed that that was a very effective argument to put before the electors; but it was a very misleading and a very unfair argument to suggest that a small duty of 2s. on foreign corn was going to raise the price of bread or reproduce the conditions that existed under the old Corn Laws. After all, there was a great deal to be said for the argument that cheapness was of no particular value unless a man had money to buy, and that employment was more important than cheapness. What they should aim at was more employment, and more regular employment, at better wages. He had heard it stated that under protection wages would be lower. He did not hold that view for a moment. He believed that any system which would be to the advantage of the home producer would have the inevitable effect of increasing wages, and if wages increased, even though there was a small increase in the cost of commodities, the position of the working class would be better off than it was now. He would give one illustration. Germany was a country which had tried both free imports and protection, and he had been able to trace in the case of one great firm—Krupps at Essen—what the wages were under both systems. From 1854 to 1873 there was a system of moderate protection in Germany, and the average wages in Krupp's works during that period was from 1·33 to 3·39 marks per day. From 1873 to 1878 there were free imports and wages fell from 3·39 to 3·31 marks per day.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) said it was obvious that wages would fall when the sudden demand for guns ceased after the conclusion of a very great war. Other conditions came in later.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said it was very remarkable that the other conditions were free imports. In 1879, when protection was introduced, wages rose from 3·09 marks in that year to 4·52 marks. which was the rate of wages last year; and during that period the cost of commodities had fallen, and the purchasing power of the German workmen had largely increased. He did not say that that was a conclusive argument; but he did say it justified them in the confident expectation that a system which secured their own markets, would have the effect of increasing wages and the purchasing power of the working man.

With reference to the colonial or Imperial side of the question the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose suggested that it was dead, or at any rate, that it had retired to the background. He wished to say so far as he and his friends were concerned that was not the case in the least. The colonial side of the question appealed most to him, and he was prepared to take the opinion of the House and the country on it. The right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to point out that this country would stand to lose very heavily by a system of colonial preference, and he said that the Colonies had very little to give. He himself disputed both propositions. He did not believe that if they developed the wheat fields of Canada the price of corn would be one penny more than it was at present. His right hon. friend the Member for Ealing said that the amount which their foreign rivals had of colonial trade was very small. But if they established a system of preferential trade with the Colonies, they would vastly develop colonial trade, and instead of sending capital to foreign countries they would be able to develop Canada and Australia, increase the population in those colonies, and increase the demand for British commodities. The Premier of Ontario speaking of Mr. Chamberlain's policy—he was in favour of it like every other public man in Canada—said the other day—

> "The only thing is, that this policy ought to have been adopted some years ago. If it had been adopted twelve years ago, the population of Canada, instead of being 6,000,000, as now, would be 20,000,000."

Canada took per head of British goods £5 worth per annum. If there were fourteen additional millions of Canadians at the present time the export of British goods to that country would be £70,000,000 more per annum than at present. He had no doubt that the policy which had been proposed would greatly develop the Colonies and be the very best thing that could happen for manufacturers at home. He was astonished at the attitude some hon. Members took up on this question of colonial preference. Cobden himself wished to get rid of the Colonies, and thought that free trade would get rid of them. Fortunately that prediction was proved to be false. Let them take the case of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol. No one would for a moment suggest that he was animated by anything but the highest spirit of patriotism and Imperialism, and yet he seemed absolutely afraid of colonial preference. He seemed to think that if we came to some sort of arrangement with our colonies we should begin breaking up instead of consolidating the Empire. If we tried to force preference on our Colonies against their desire we might be going the right way to destroy the Empire, but the demand for preference came from the Colonies themselves and not from us, and no one would for a moment suppose that the unanimous resolution of the Premiers of the self-governing Colonies was forced upon them by the ex-Colonial Secretary. Not only had the Colonies requested preference, but several of them—Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand—had already given it, and the main issue between political parties in the last Australian elections was the refusal of the Government to go as far in this direction as their opponents desired. This offer, too, was being made to us at the very time that every foreign nation was closing its doors to our trade. Markets in nearly every part of the world were being shut to us, and were we to be such slaves of economic pedantry as to refuse to consider the arguments now put forward? Were we at the time that our trade was being diminished all over the world to lose the only opportunity of extending it? This question might be misunderstood, it might be overlaid with catch-penny phrases, such as free food, but he felt sure that when the time came for a clear issue to be laid before the country the policy of change so ably and so enthusiastically advocated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham would be bound to succeed.

*MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) said the last speaker had left them in no doubt as to his position, but he need be under no fear that the question would be misunderstood; the longer it was discussed the better the people at large understood it. They all welcomed the plain, straightforward and manly speech of the hon.

Member for North Lonsdale, a member of a great historic family. If anything were needed to justify the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose in bringing forward his Amendment it was to be found in the course the debate had taken. They had had some most interesting speeches. The discussion was absolutely necessary, and it would have been a dereliction of duty if the Opposition had not challenged the opinion of the House on this subject. They had already had four speeches from members of Cabinet and ex-Cabinet rank. First there had been the remarkable declaration of the President of the Board of Trade; then they had had a no less remarkable speech from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol; next they had had the contribution of the noble Lord the late Secretary of State for India, and finally they had had the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton, raising important points to which as yet no reply had been given. This House was the grand inquest of the nation; it was its duty to investigate this matter, and he was astonished at the entire absence through long periods of Cabinet Ministers. Such conduct in former days would have been held to justify a Motion for Adjournment. More explicit information was required from the Treasury Bench. The Secretary to the Board of Trade, whose intervention was delightful in everything that made speech attractive, had appeared as a full blown protectionist, and yet, on the previous night, his chief repudiated any doctrine of the kind. He had said with great truth that some of the questions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton could only be replied to by the Prime Minister, but surely, even though, unfortunately, the Prime Minister was prevented from being present, there was some Minister who could speak with the voice of authority and declare the position of the Government? Could not the Cabinet meet and draw up a Memorandum and entrust it to the Home Secretary to read? Let some one be empowered to state explicitly and clearly the position of the Government. Still it was not with the Government that they had to deal for the moment. Everyone knew that the real protagonist was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. He (Mr. Ellis) had always recognised that he had ideals on the subject of Empire, and he had never thought that he put forward these doctrines and left the Cabinet from any but high motives. But he did think the right hon. Gentleman had been mistaken, and that some of his ways had been most reprehensible; still the right hon. Gentleman no doubt believed himself to be the missionary of truth and had indulged in what had been termed a raging tearing propaganda. He noticed one curious incident on the first night of the session. The Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to find fault with the Leader of the Opposition for alluding to the author of this policy, and said he did not know it had ever before happened on the opening night that so much attention had been paid to a private Member. But the matter was not to be brushed aside in that fashion. *The Times* had remarked—

> "Mr. Chamberlain's policy is not a Parliamentary question at all. Some of us sympathise with his efforts to convert the country, but until he does convert the country no one can give effect to his sympathy."

Surely the first place in which this subject should be discussed was the Commons House of Parliament. Hon. Members were bound to maintain on the floor of the House what they had said outside.

The first fault he found with the policy propounded by the late Colonial Secretary was want of recognition of history. The last speaker, like so many, seemed to think that the matter began and ended with Richard Cobden. Long before Richard Cobden lived the principles of free trade were enunciated, and it was not because Cobden believed that other countries would follow our example that he agitated for the abolition of the Corn Laws; it was because he believed it would be for the benefit of these islands. Let hon. Members devote a little more time to the study of *Hansard*, and they would find that long before Cobden's day the principles of free trade were advocated by statesmen, and it was a policy accepted by both political Parties from the great debate and division in 1852 down to May last year. The onus therefore rested on those who wanted to put back the hands of the clock, and who believed in proection, to prove their case. The right hon.

Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham appeared to forget that every single argument he had used was demolished over and over again in the debates which occurred in that House a generation or two ago. Whenever the arguments advanced were reduced to specific instances and definite calculations it was at once seen how illusory they were. He understood the President of the Board of Trade had rather given up the theory of decaying trades. [AN HON. MEMBER: Where is he?] Here and there they might find in certain industries a particular concern which was not very flourishing and not paying a high rate of interest to its shareholders, but that arose from a cause which had not been sufficiently recognised. That cause was the operation of the Companies Acts, by which the old individual personal management had been lost. The new management had not improved in quality. The boards of directors, many of them composed of gentlemen not brought up to the business, but who had simply invested their money with a view to getting a higher rate of interest, were not in close touch with the business or the *employés*. Besides that, many of these concerns had had their capital inflated to an absurd extent. He believed that company management was responsible for a good deal of the complaints of bad trade. He had a curious illustration of that the other day. A clergyman came to him and said, "I think there must be something in this scheme of Chamberlain's for I am going to get 10 per cent. on my investment instead of 5 per cent." On inquiry he found that the money was invested in a concern which he knew very well. It dealt in a commodity in universal demand, and formerly belonged to a family which made great fortunes; but it had now passed into the hands of a company, the capital in it had been quadrupled, it had a very inefficient board of directors, and, of course, could not pay a good dividend. It was that sort of concern which it was hoped the Birmingham scheme would benefit. The only people who had been bitten by this scheme of 10 per cent. duties were a number of manufacturers who, here and there, were not in the first rank of their industries, and some of whom, he knew, were on the Tariff Commission. He remembered sitting as a youth in the gallery and hearing the introduction of the Budget of 1860, when Mr. Gladstone said—

> "We are all without exception free-traders, but none of us are free-traders without an exception, and the exception is always in favour of ourselves."

These gentlemen all thought they were going to get something out of the scheme, but when they came to the question of what each was to pay, then would arise the difficulty.

It was also said that there was to be some advantage to agriculture. Certainly the agriculturists were not going to allow a tax to be enjoyed by manufacturers unless they got something out of it also. But he would like the right hon. Member for Sleaford, for example, to say what the farmer was going to get, to show a balance-sheet setting out what the duties would bring him and what he would have to pay for enchanced price of commodities, how much the landlord would get, and how much the increase of wages would be which was given to the labourers. In his judgment the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman was crude to the last degree. It had not been carefully thought out, and it changed like a chameleon from day to day. But all the vices to which he had referred faded into insignificance beside the one great vice that it gave no recognition to the manifold variety and the enormous and delicate complexity of our commercial system. He had been astounded when responsible years ago as chairman of a bank at the delicate web and net-work which our commercial system had assumed. Why was it that not a single banker of repute sat on the Tariff Commission. *The Times* of that morning remarked that banking only deals in the "exchange and distribution," but surely these elements were a large and vital portion of our commercial life? All the speeches which had been made, from the right hon. Gentleman downwards, were lacking in the accent of personal responsibility and experience in affairs. Business firms with which he was connected had received the list of questions the Commission were asking, but was it to be supposed that replies would be sent to persons of no authority, and who had no right to put the questions? The whole thing was more or less of an imposture. What lay at the root of this whole scheme of fiscal reform was the artificial enhancement of the cost of living of the people of this country. He regretted the absence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham, but it was necessary to consider at whose instance the scheme was put forward. The right hon. Gentleman's public career was not such as to give authority to the pledges he had offered.

Coming back in conclusion to the Government, the President of the Board of Trade had left something to be desired in the matter of clearness by constantly interposing among his declarations as a Cabinet Minister his individual personal opinions. The House and the country were entitled to and must have, before the debate closed, some authoritative utterance on behalf of the Cabinet as to the precise position of the Government on one of the greatest matters that had arisen in our day. There were only two roads in connection with this question—the ancient road, which was forsaken sixty years ago, which entailed disaster and untold difficulties and hardship upon the people of this land, and the road along which, by the universal agreement of both Parties, the country had travelled since then. As a free-trader by conviction, and to a certain extent by heredity, nothing would induce him to consent to a scheme such as that which had emanated from Birmingham in so unprecedented a manner, and which he believed would conduce to nothing short of national disaster.

Lord HUGH CECIL expressed his profound regret that the debate on this question was held for the first time on such an occasion. It was impossible not to feel how much the Unionist Party, how much the Government itself, would have been spared if they had consented to give them what they asked for last session—the opportunity of debating without dividing, of merely interchanging opinions upon this great question, of eliciting from all sides the varying judgments of different shades of opinion upon the subject. They would have avoided, he was confident, the wide, the painful divisions which now tormented the Unionist Party. He suspected they would have been still a united Party, following a united Cabinet, instead of divided, listening to different voices and trying, amidst the confusion of an unprecedented situation, to find out what was the guidance of their leaders and what was the path of their own duty. In the present circumstances it was impossible not to speak to some extent for one's self, because when opinion was in its present state of flux, no one could tell whether they accurately represented the opinions of any one except themselves. Therefore, speaking strictly for himself, might he say one word as to the position he occupied in regard to this Amendment and in regard to the policy of the Government? He approached the subject, let him say at once, as a Conservative heart and soul. He was afraid some of his hon. friends would think it disloyal, or at least an undisciplined, avowal when he said that he held precisely the same political opinions to-day as he did twelve months ago. If we had, as the French had, the custom of describing things by a particular year, he would say he was a Conservative of 1895. He held to the full all the principles that were then maintained by the Conservative Administration which was returned to power in that year, and he was satisfied that those principles were still, as they were then, consistent with the doctrines of free trade. The second salient point of the position from which he was bound to approach this subject was that he was altogether convinced of the truth of the doctrines of free trade. He was assured by many people that his position was an impossible one—that nowadays one must be either a Radical or a protectionist, that there was no place in politics for those who did not fall into the one category or the other. It might be so, but he could not help that. He could not conceive anybody desiring to remain in political life except on their own terms. His terms involved, as an indispensable requirement, that he should be implicitly faithful to the principles both of Conservatism and of free trade. That being his point of view, what was the position to which it led him?

Though he agreed with almost everything the President of the Board of Trade said, he was not able to agree with him when he said that the policy proposed by the Member for West Birmingham was not the main issue before the country. He thought it was. It did not rest with the Government, it did not rest with any individual, however eminent, to decide what was the issue before the country. The Government could not make a thing an issue by saying it was the issue. They could not prevent a thing being an issue by denying that it was one. The question that was occupying the attention of the great mass of the people outside the House was, "Is the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham right or is he wrong? Is his policy the salvation of the Empire and of British industry, or is it hurtful to the Empire and ruinous to British industry?" It was futile to pretend that anything else really occupied the mind of the country. When he addressed his mind to the policy of the Government, as it was stated by the President of the Board of Trade, his misgivings were not altogether removed. It was true that, as that right hon. Gentleman stated, the policy of the Government there was little if anything in it to which he objected on economic grounds. He did not object at all to the principle of retaliation, and he saw no reason for adhering to the maxim of a tariff for revenue only, supposing they could get the same good by a tariff for any other purpose; but he thought with his right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol that so far as retaliation went, it would have been very much better and more convenient if the Government had made any positive proposal which they had to make, now at once. He did not understand why they were to have a solemn novitiate before they entered upon this new policy. If it was for the sake of its heterodoxy he was afraid that his right hon. friend was perfectly aware that the Government two or three years ago took a step which, in point of heterodoxy, was a much stronger order than retaliation. Retaliation received honourable mention from so orthodox a writer as John Stuart Mill. The Government, with his full support, did a much more heterodox thing than retaliation by imposing an export duty on coal. But they never announced beforehand that they were going to reverse the fiscal system of the country. They simply proposed the duty: it was argued on its merits, and, a majority of the House having been convinced that it was a good proposal, it was adopted. Why could they not have done the same thing in regard to retaliation? Retaliation was a much greater reversal of the traditions of sixty years than an export duty on coal. As described by the right hon. Gentleman, retaliation was only a small modification of our fiscal traditions of sixty years ago. But there was another policy which was a reversal of those traditions. Was it possible to rid one's mind of the suspicion that this more moderate policy was called a reversal in order to use a term which would cover the two policies together, confuse the matter, and draw together into one scheme of political action free-traders and protectionists, who, though they disagreed, might, it was thought, co-operate for the success of the Government and their policy? He thought the Government were fairly exposed to that suspicion. He felt it all the more when he studied, not merely what they had said, but their words and actions during the past three or four months.

What distinction had been made between the policy which was now repudiated by his right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham and the official policy of the Government? What had anybody gained by being an official fiscal reformer, and what had anybody lost by being an unofficial fiscal reformer? How many people had made speeches from which it was quite impossible to infer whether they were official or unofficial fiscal reformers? He really thought that the only strictly loyal adherent to the Leadership of the Prime Minister was the Duke of Devonshire, for he had drawn a distinction between the official and the unofficial policy which was perfectly logical in its character. What was the effect upon the public mind if they saw election after election taking place and the organisation selecting a candidate who maintained the unofficial, the unauthorised, and now the repudiated policy, and if they saw that candidate blessed by the Prime Minister, given a watchword, and the whole force of the political organisation devoted to his return, while all the time he was advocating a policy to which the President of the Board of Trade, and, they presumed, the Prime Minister, were opposed? If such a candidate became the typical member of the Party of the future, both his right hon. friends must retire from office, or they were landed in this paradoxical situation—that they had all the official resources of the Government used to further a policy which would imply the retirement from official position of the leaders of the Party to which that Government belonged. But there was an instance of something stronger than paradox. That a Minister should go down and oppose a Conservative Member for the sake of a policy which his Leader had not adopted and which his colleague had now repudiated—should oppose one who had been a supporter of him so long as he was loyal to the faith of the Party; that, indeed, was a violation of all the traditions of Party government and of the best reputation of public life. Yes, and he saw his right hon. friend still sitting upon that Bench. He had not gone forth into the wilderness to preach a crusade in favour of the principles he upheld; he was content to stab in the back—[Cries of "Oh!" and OPPOSITION cheers]—those who were honestly trying to maintain their own opinion within the limits which the Prime Minister, whom he served, had declared to to be sufficient. Grateful as he was for the declaration of the President of the Board of Trade, and heartily as he agreed with almost every word of that declaration, he did not think it altered the main lines of the political situation. After all, what would happen supposing things went on as they had gone on during the last three or four months? He really thought his right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade would be more uneasy than he was if he were less confident that the Opposition were going to win the next election. Supposing the policy of fiscal reform received the support of a majority of the next House of Commons. According to his right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade the present Government would be precluded from proposing a preference or imposing a tax on food; they would be opposed to the policy of putting a 10 per cent. duty on manufactured goods; even in respect of retaliation he admitted that he saw difficulties in putting it into operation against Russia or the United States. What sort of enthusiasm would that kind of Government excite in the minds of the then majority of the House of Commons? He did not think such a Government would last long; he thought it would inevitably have to give place to another Government. Then, did we not reach this sort of conclusion—he did not see his hon. friend the Member for Bradford in his place, but, in the absence of that clear-minded creator of crystals he would say that a vote given for the Birmingham policy was a vote for driving the Prime Minister, the President of the Board of Trade, and all their colleagues who agree with them out of the Government. The Party organisations were choosing candidates in favour of the Birmingham policy; and if the Party under that *régime* achieved a success, the success would have as its immediate result the destruction of the Leader of the Party. That was a position so paradoxical that it embarrassed the Party to a point which must make it weak for all purposes of electoral fighting, and which must involve grave injustice to those who were honestly trying to take a course according to their consciences, but were not able to agree with the unauthorised policy. Not only pressure, but actual exclusion, had been practised, not only against free-fooders, but against those who were altogether supporters of the Government policy. His hon. friend the Member for Portsmouth he saw was unable to stand again for that constituency because he was not a supporter—not of the Government policy, but of the policy of the Member for West Birmingham. If the Birmingham policy, then, was not the issue, what was an issue? What had the Government done to prevent these things happening? He quite agreed that the speech of his right hon. friend was a new thing, and it marked, he hoped, a new step in the career of the Government; but previously even the most free-trade members of the Government thought it necessary to begin by sneers at Cobden, to talk about the necessity of reviewing our policy after an experience of sixty years, which might be true, but meant exceedingly little, conveying to listeners and readers the general impression that the Government were, after all, in their hearts thoroughly with the Member for West Birmingham, and all the time were ready to carry out his policy whenever they got the opportunity.

Turning to the question of how he ought to vote on the Amendment, he asked what would have been said if any other question than free trade had been treated in this ambiguous manner—for instance, Home Rule or disestablishment. His right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade had spoken of pious opinions. He might have taken as an illustration the opinions which the Member for West Birmingham, he understood, entertained in favour of disestablishment. Nobody complained of that view in the circumstances; but if the right hon. Gentleman had carried on a great mission in favour of disestablishment, if the Prime Minister had adopted a doubtful and ambiguous policy on Church reform, if the members of the Government had said they were heartily in favour of Church reform, but looked forward at no distant date to going on to the greater and wider policy of disestablishment, if one of the members of the Government was found on a Liberationist platform against some person who was a supporter of the Establishment—what would have been his feelings? Could any one doubt that he would have voted for anything and everything that would have expressed disapprobation of the attitude of the Government? He could not in any circumstances vote against the right hon. Gentleman whose Amendment was now before the House, because he agreed with every word of that Amendment. He did not attach much importance to the preamble, and the rest of the Amendment was merely a very moderate statement of the doctrine of free trade, of which everybody who called himself a free-trader must be a supporter. Therefore he could not vote against such an Amendment as that. Nor did he think the technical doctrine that the quality of the Amendment as a vote of censure was more important than its wording, could be allowed to stand in the way of a great issue like this. Members of Parliament must think of the impression this would produce. In the House they understood the value of those technicalities, but outside people did not know what was meant by an Amendment to the Address, but they understood if a proposal was put forward it was a proposal in favour of free trade, and they would say to their representative, "If you are a free-trader, why should you not vote for free trade." They must beware of being too subtle in these things and take one side or the other. They must adopt the natural straightforward course which would commend itself to plain people outside the House in carrying out the functions of a Member of the House of Commons. There remained two courses, that of abstention and that of voting for the Amendment. He did not intend to decide with actual finality at that moment between those two courses. He could not conceal from the House that abstention was a course very uncongenial to his temperament. He did not like to halt, or to seem to halt, betweeen two courses. He had often seen, in the case of persons very much more distinguished, the danger of doing so. He had watched the very skilful manœuvres of the Prime Minister during the last session, and he could not say he thought they were to his advantage or that of his Party. He had also watched the unskilful manœuvres, two years ago, of the Leader of the Opposition, and in his case also he thought they were not to the right hon. Gentleman's advantage. If he knew that the Government were really going to fight the battle of free trade against the Member for Birmingham and would act to the full up to the declarations of the President of the Board of Trade; if all through the Government would use the whole resources of Party discipline and Party organisation in order to retain retaliation and no more, then certainly he would be inclined to abstain from any course which might embarrass the Government.

With regard to retaliation, though he recognised the great difficulties in the way, he admitted that there was a strong case to be made in its favour. He was not what his right hon. friend felicitously called a Quaker in these things and he saw no reason for peace at any price. But he thought it would be well to have it known that we were prepared to retaliate if we were very badly treated. He was bound, however, to say that if the instances in which it had been used were examined, it did not seem to have produced very important results for good, and it had unquestionably done a great deal of mischief. He was told that those who supported the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham were called "whole-hoggers," while those who supported the Prime Minister were called "little-piggers." He believed that the Prime Minister's taste for pork was very delicate, and he thought he would probably have only a pig of the smallest dimensions; so that he could honestly say that he was a supporter of the policy of economic orthodoxy professed by the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister was one of those persons who liked to make themselves out a great deal more protectionist than they were, just as some people were always telling one, "What a devil of a fellow" they were in their youth. The right hon. Gentleman liked to have his gibe at old Cobden and the rest, but in point of fact he was a very steady-going, respectable citizen at heart. He wished in a more serious vein to say that if he found himself in the Opposition lobby when a division was taken, it did not indicate that he dissented from the general policy of the Government, or even from their economic policy as explained by his right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade, and, least of all, that he had the slightest intention of modifying in any sense whatever his adherence to Conservatism as he had always understood it.

Passing to the merits of the policy put before them by the Member for West Birmingham, one rough observation applied to the industries which were supposed to be dying. It was that if one competent critic said an industry was in a bad state, and another that it was in a very good state, they would not be far wrong in assuming that it was really doing pretty well, but not so well as everybody might wish. Had the industries been really dying, the agitation this would have occasioned would have been so great that they would not have had to wait the return of the right hon. Gentleman from the illimitable veldt in order to know it. It was the highest compliment to his right hon. friend to say that his heart was really in the Imperial side of the subject, and it was only when he looked into the matter with the bias which the policy of preference suggested

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to him that the industries of England appeared to him to be in such a critical condition. They might, therefore, without unreason, be a little sceptical of this theory of ruined industries, which no one ever thought of until his ingenious, interesting, and important Imperial policy was put before the country.

Mr. DISRAELI (Cheshire, Altrincham) was understood to say these trade proposals were thought of twenty years ago.

Lord HUGH CECIL said that was very true. They were thought out long ago, very carefully considered, and altogether rejected. They were elaborately developed twenty years ago, and it was the right hon. Member for West Birmingham who, with his very distinguished talents, destroyed the agitation and maintained the fabric of free trade.

He turned therefore to the Imperial side of the question. What was it that was put before them? What end was it to serve? They were told that it made for the unity of the Empire, and they were asked whether they were willing to make sacrifices for so great an object. Certainly he would be, and all would be, willing to make important sacrifices for the unity of the Empire. The question therefore resolved itself into this, was this policy really one that made for the unity of the Empire. He regretted that in the speeches advocating the policy very little was said to show how that object would be effected by it. Would it prevent secession? It was said that was one of the objects it might lead to. He could not conceive of anyone supposing that the Colonies should be so excited and angry that they would break their sentimental ties and the associations of common patriotism which now bound them to the Empire, and that at the very moment of secession they would change their mind when they remembered that they were getting 2s. a quarter from this country on their wheat. Those who knew the history of the world knew the deep passions which alone produced these secessions, and they must be aware that if passion did rise to the height which would make secession a possibility, no preferential tariff would for an instant stand in the way? It would be like trying to bridle a great stream with a wisp of grass. It would be swept away and carried down into the sea by the resistless flood. Would this policy make for the unification of the Empire? That was what many people believed. He had tried to consider what history said on the subject. Was there any case in history in which such an arrangement had made for unification which could at all be compared with the present case? The case of Germany was often instanced, but after all what made the unity of Germany was not the Zollverein. The history of the unity of Germany depended upon a great many historical subjects. The highest patriotic sentiment was excited, but even then unity was not produced. Unity was finally produced not a little by the blood and iron of the Prussian Monarch. The unity of Germany was built round the ascendancy of Russia. There was no analogy between that and the present case. We were in a different position, and anything resembling force or coercion would be out of the question. How did the Zollverein in their case operate? It operated by taking away the barriers which stood in the way of a natural unity. Here there were natural frontiers, and a Zollverein was not proposed. The cases were so different that they could not argue from one to another. The instance of Scotland was also instructive. Scotland was undoubtedly made a contented country eventually by the fiscal terms which were arranged at the time of the Union. But the Union was not very successful from the national point of view, because it was so unpopular that it was directly the cause of two rebellions in fifty years. What made the Union successful was that its fiscal advantages were so great that it raised Scotland from poverty to great riches. Was anything like that likely in the case of the Colonies? Every one admitted that the Colonies were already highly prosperous, and whatever might be effected by the proposals of his right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham would make but slight difference to them. If they desired to see how slight the effect would be, let them consider the case of Ireland. Such was the force of racial, religious, and agrarian differences that Ireland was not united to England, despite all the preferential treatment in her interest. The truth was that these arrangements were in the nature of a bargain, and a bargain always led to disputes and hardly ever to unity. The case of Canada was also worth considering. Were we going to ask Canada to accept a larger number of British imports at a time that we were declaring that German imports into Great Britain were a curse? Was it intended to inflict upon Canada the sorrows which this country suffered from German imports? Were they going to deprive the Canadian people of their industries so that they would have to go into the workhouses, or migrate to the cold Western territory to till the fields. One might indulge in much rhetoric of the same kind if one had the time of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham to deal with it. Thus, by the application of protectionist principles, they would have created a machinery which would promote Imperial disunion, although it was done in the name of Imperial union. The proposal was that we should impose imports on Canada while we resented them in our own case from the foreigner. We were at the same time to keep open ports for the Colonies. It was obvious that the English producer would very soon come to resent colonial imports. He would very soon begin to think that colonial imports were all that foreign imports were supposed to be. This would irritate and divide, and therefore the argument of unification could not stand. Then there was the argument of the colonial demand. But even that was not very strong. He should like to draw attention to a statement which had appeared in *The Times* of 2nd February from its correspondent in Australia in an account of the Australian elections. It was very remarkable coming from a source rather in favour of the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birminngham. The correspondent said—

> "It must be apparent that a community so much in earnest about its fiscal future would not have withheld a single vote for free trade even if Mr. Chamberlain's preferential proposals had been before it for acceptance or rejection. But it was felt in New South Wales, as well as in the other States, that the preferential trade proposals of Mr. Chamberlain have not at present come within the range of practical

politics. When the proposals do come up for separate consideration and decision the free-traders of New South Wales and the other States are much more likely to meet Mr. Chamberlain half-way than are the protectionsts. Notwithstanding Mr. Deakin's assurances that he will give a return to the mother country for preferential treatment of Australian products, the prospect that any reductions of our present duties will be made in favour of British manufacturers is extremely remote. Mr. Deakin may be willing to do this, but will the protectionist party support him? So far that party has not shown the slightest disposition to do so."

We found that our colonies were lukewarm on the subject, and that had removed from us the very last argument that could be made of Imperial sympathies in favour of the policy which was recommended.

He should like to ask finally what were we to think of a doctrine that had been put forward, notably at the Guildhall, as to the decay of Empire, and Spain and Holland had been mentioned. Certainly those countries had not fallen through free trade, and Spain retained her colonial empire till the beginning of the nineteenth century, long after she had lost her position as a great Power. One might make a contrast between England after she lost her American colonies, and Spain after she lost her position as a great Power. The true explanation was that the life at the centre remained unimpaired in Great Britain, but was gone in the case of Spain. Powers did not die from the circumference, but from the centre, and it was of what threatened the centre that we ought to be most afraid. He maintained that the policy of protection threatened the central life of a country in three ways. First, it led to extravagance, because it veiled the taxation necessary to meet growing expenditure under the pleasing guise of protection for home industries. Secondly, protection promoted profound social discontent, which was so notable a feature of almost every country on the Continent, and from which we were happily free. We had almost forgotten what it was like, but we knew it once. There was a time when the Chartist agitation was just the same to us as the Social Democratic agitation was to Germany; and the Chartist agitation, curiously enough, disappeared just about the time when we adopted free trade. Did anybody suppose that any benefit to the Empire could equal the evil caused to the whole Empire by the growing up of a revolutionary party in Great Britain? The third danger to the life at home was corruption. He had always supported reasonable and fair treatment to the great licensed victualling interest in this country; but he could not shut his eyes to the fact that a highly organised trade, having its pecuniary interests intimately bound up with the decisions of Parliament, was a very bad thing for political life. There was the instance also of a very large body of Government *employés* exercising pressure on Members of Parliament. If protection were adopted every trade, knowing that its wealth or poverty depended on the decisions of Parliament, would put all the pressure in their power on Members of Parliament to do them a good turn. He did not know whether corruption would take the extreme form of giving bribes, but corruption might be just as real and destructive to national life when it was a matter of log-rolling, pressure, and lobbying, which was so familiar a feature in protectionist countries.

There was behind this controversy another which had hardly come fully into the open, he should perhaps say a difference of opinion, which he believed to be very deep-seated, and to lie at the root of a good deal of the passion imported into the present discussion. There were, he believed, two Imperialisms. There was the Imperialism which looked only to profit, and that which had its spring in duty. The former looked on the Empire as a gigantic profit-sharing business, losing sight of those aspects of Empire which were its justification in other eyes. He should be sorry if we lowered our ideas of Empire. He repudiated from the bottom of his heart the counsels of those who would have us shrink from the necessary sacrifices, or from bold and even heroic courses when they were necessary. He believed Empire to be not merely a possession, but a sacred trust; and he liked to watch, as in Egypt and the Soudan, how the English brought good things to those who had been less blessed than themselves. But if the Empire were to be great, must we not wish that its great power should be exercised without the taint of corruption; that if its dominion were long, and its heart bold to endure all sacrifices, its mind also might be pure and its hands clean; and that it might go upon its path serene and majestic, driving before it all the evil things of anarchy and barbarism, and carrying in its train justice and civilisation and religion? So, indeed, we might justify Empire and believe that its part was a divine part—its sceptre the sceptre of righteousness, and its power the instrument of Heaven.

SIR THOMAS WRIGHTSON (St. Pancras, E.) said he listened with very great interest to the remarks made by the hon. Member for the Colne Valley Division. In that speech he described the complaints which were made by ironmasters as to the evils resulting from the importation of goods to be sold below cost price. He did not profess to have the long experience of his hon. friend, but he hoped he had sufficient knowledge of the subject to speak with a certain degree of authority upon it. The hon. Member for Colne Valley had spoken of the improved appliances made use of in Germany for the manufacture of iron and steel. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that in the works of which he was himself a director in the district of Middlesborough, and in which they manufactured the very goods which were being so heavily dumped at the present time, every one of these improvements had been carried out; and yet with the very best management possible they had not been able to manufacture their goods at the same price as the Germans. The same held good in Wales, where last year no less than 200,000 tons of steel bars were imported. In the North of England and the Midlands, as well as in Wales, they were able to manufacture these materials just as well as the Germans. They had the coal under the ground on which they stepped, they had the ironstone, and all the other raw materials, and it was incredible that they were not in as good a position to manufacture these goods as the Germans. The enormous amount of material coming into the Midlands, the Northern Counties, and Wales, would not be imported there if the local manufacturers had not made up their minds that it was impossible to compete with this dumping. The matter was as simple as possible. If they looked at the German papers they saw that the price of steel bars delivered in Wales was £4 per ton, while the price for the home market in Westphalia was £6 per ton.

MR. LOUGH: There is a duty on pig-iron in Germany.

SIR THOMAS WRIGHTSON said that there was a very heavy duty against British pig-iron, but the Germans could deliver the manufactured iron in England duty free, and that enabled them to charge a high price to their own people. In fact the Germans manipulated their prices in such a way as to get underneath the English market, and that was the real reason why dumping could take place. The question was—could the English manufacturers be expected to go on manufacturing at a loss? They would be very foolish if they did. They must go into another branch of trade or give up altogether. In his own particular work they had gone into another branch of trade, and in doing so they had to put down a large amount of capital, which came in before the ordinary share capital. There was considerable disorganisation of the trade in consequence of the change, and there was, therefore, great loss. These were some of the results of the dumping system. It was pretended by certain members of the community that the cheapness which was the result of the importations from Germany and America was a compensation to us, because it was a benefit to the consumer. It might be a benefit to the consumer temporarily, but what were the causes of the rise and fall of prices which alternately benefited the consumer and the producer? Those causes were obviously automatic in their action. If the manufacturer produced too much, the prices went down; if the prices went down so low that the manufacturers were discouraged from manufacturing more, the prices went up again. But the whole of this automatic action was altered if they allowed the introduction of articles at below cost price. To allow the foreigners to supply our markets and keep the price at an unremunerative rate was disastrous to the local manufacturer. The interest of the producer and the consumer should be identical. What would be the effect after the Germans and the Americans had taken entire possession of our markets? People said "Oh, there is no difficulty in that; if a lower grade trade is taken possession of by the foreigners, let our own manufacturers take possession of the higher grade." But if the foreigner was in possession of the lower grade, the native manufacturer of the higher grade would be entirely in the hands of the former, and the foreigner would immediately put up his price upon the manufacturer of the higher grade. In this way we would soon cease to be the great manufacturing nation that we now were, and we would look back with regret that we had not sooner adopted a policy to protect our industries. The policy of the Government meant that we should look after our own interests, because the greatness of our country was owing to our industries on which our commerce was based. It was on these grounds that he upheld very strongly the policy of the Government for the protection of our manufacturing industries, and the provision of employment for our working people.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned"—(*Sir Charles Dilke*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

NEW BILLS.

TRADE MARKS.

Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to Trade Marks, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Fletcher Moulton, Sir William Houldsworth, Mr. Cripps, Mr. Cawley, Mr. Butcher, Mr. Robson, and Sir Albert Rollit.

TRADE MARKS BILL.

"To consolidate and amend the Law relating to Trade Marks," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 53.]

EASEMENT OF LIGHT.

Bill to amend the Law relating to Easement of Light, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Fletcher Moulton, Mr. H. D. Greene, Mr. Herbert Robertson, Mr. Robson, and Mr. Haldane.

EASEMENT OF LIGHT BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Easement of Light," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 54.]

Adjourned at ten minutes before
Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 10th February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Kettering Improvement Bill (by Order). Read a second time, and committed.

Torquay Tramways Bill. "To authorise the construction of Tramways in Torquay; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; to be read a second time.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

The Chairman of Ways and Means reported, that, after conferring with the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, for the purpose of determining in which House of Parliament the respective Bills should be first considered, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had determined that the Bills contained in the following list should originate in the House of Lords:—Clyde Valley Electrical Power; Govan Burgh (Electricity); Lothians Electric Power; Young and Bell's Patents. Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Brixton; Upper Norwood; West Dulwich; Prescelly; Cloughfold; Cheetham Hill; Winchester; Peniel; Halifax; Leicester; Tudhoe Colliery; Llansamlet; Clevedon; Hyfrydir; Preston; South Hackney; Cheltenham; Rhayader; Hedgerley; Darlington; Penisarwaen; Maesydref; Port Dinorwic; Bontnewyd; Maybole; Fenstanton; Seaton (two); Haslingden; Glasgow; Bristol; Emsworth; Green Moor; Kilmarnock; Port Glasgow; Newton Heath; Pontycymmer (two); Lindal; Buchlyvies; Bannockburn; Westhoughton; Salford (two); Paisley; Altrincham; Llansantffraid; Dewsbury; Llwynmaur; Glynceiriog; Wilsden; Cullompton Hill of Beath; Aberystwyth; Rhydlewis; Low Leighton; Pencombe; Leominster; Hammersmith; Bampton; Buckland; Crieff (two); Comrie; Derby; and Lower Broughton; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF GROUND RENTS AND VALUES.

Petition from Bermondsey, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1903-4).

Estimate presented, of the Further Sums required to be voted for the Service of the year ending 31st March, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 44.]

DUCHY OF CORNWALL.

Account presented, of the Receipts and Disbursements of the Duchy of Cornwall for the year ended 31st December, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 45.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 4th February, 1904, declaring that Charles Dyer, Viewer, Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT, 1888.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries, under the provisions of the said Act, for the variation of the Order creating the Southern Sea Fisheries District [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Contracts for Shipment of Stores to Gibraltar.

Mr. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, having regard to the increased consignment of military and naval stores to Gibraltar since

1894, and to the fact that no tenders for transport of same have been invited since that date, he will now consider the advisability of permitting other shipping companies to tender for the contract in question.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The question has been carefully considered in consultation with the Admiralty shipping agents, and, in view of the terms of the present contract and the conditions of the Gibraltar trade, it is not considered that any advantage would be gained by inviting fresh tenders. The contract gives a regular weekly service, and has been carried out very satisfactorily.

Re-armament of Volunteer Artillery.

MR. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): To ask the Secretary of State for War what steps are being taken towards the re-armament of the mobile batteries of the Artillery Volunteers.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Forty-four batteries have been armed with the 4·7-inch gun—total 176 guns. The re-armament of the remaining eighty-one batteries with fifteen pounders has been commenced by the issue of forty-eight of these guns from reserves; and further issues will be made as these guns become available when the field artillery is re-armed.

Revision of Belfast Post Office.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received the reports of the two Dublin officials who recently revised the Belfast office; and, if so, whether their recommendations will be carried out.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The reports in question have been received and are under consideration.

Removal of Paupers.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been directed to a correspondence with the Local Government Board for Scotland in the case of a pauper named George Allsopp, a native of Hull, who was removed at the instance of the Halifax Guardians to Glasgow in September last, the man having been sent originally under legal warrant from Glasgow to Hull in 1894; and, if so, whether he will consider the desirability of affording the Scotch authorities similar particulars and an opportunity for appeal against the removal of any poor person from England to Scotland, such as pertains both in England and Ireland in the case of poor persons proposed to be removed from Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am aware of the correspondence referred to in the Question. I will take note of the suggestion that some alteration should be made in the Law relative to removals from England to Scotland. I presume, however, that the reference in the latter part of the Question is to the rights conferred by Section 5 of The Poor Law (Scotland) Act, 1898; if so, I may point out that there would be no power of appeal under this enactment in such a case as the present if it were proposed to remove a pauper from Scotland to England. The section does not apply where a pauper is born in the country from which it is proposed to remove him, and it is alleged that this was the case in the present instance.

Chargers for European Officers in Indian Cavalry Regiments.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether any decision has yet been arrived at by the Government of India in the matter of granting to the European Officers of the Indian Cavalry similar privileges as to chargers as those enjoyed by Cavalry Officers of the British Army, which was stated by the Secretary of State in June last year† to be then engaging the attention of the Government of India; and, if not, if he will state what is the reason for the delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The matter is still under consideration by the Government of India, who have been recently addressed asking for an early reply.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxiv., 374.

Payment of Commutation Allowances to Retired Members of Indian Uncovenanted Services.

SIR SEYMOUR KING: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that retired members of the Indian Uncovenanted Services who draw their pensions in the United Kingdom, under the decision of the Select Committee of this House which sat in 1890, at the rate of 1*s*. 9*d*. for the rupee, are obliged to commute on a rupee basis the proportion of their pension which is sanctioned under the regulations, thus incidentally depriving them of a part of the benefit to which they are entitled under the settlement of 1890, the Government will allow commutation allowances in these cases to be remitted home at the officially fixed rate of 1*s*. 9*d*.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The matter has not been brought before me hitherto. I will give it careful consideration.

Army Estimates—Publication of Appendices.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether in the Army Estimates of the present year he will include all the appendices that are usually presented, some of which were from pressure of business omitted last year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The reply is in the affirmative.

Expenditure under the South African Loan Act.

MR. BUCHANAN: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will state the amounts spent under the South African Loan Act for the various purposes enumerated in the Schedule to the Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) As I am not at present in possession of Returns of local expenditure on Guaranteed Loan Account up to date, I can only give approximate figures, which are as follows: I. A. (Repaid to Imperial Treasury) £1,500,000 (actual). B. (Repaid to Imperial Treasury) £2,482,700 (actual). C. (Paid to Cape and Natal, but there may have been further local expenditure) £1,500,000 (actual). II. (Including repayment of £1,000,000 to Imperial Exchequer for rolling stock) £12,000,000 (estimate). III. A. (Repaid to Imperial Treasury) £3,000,000 (actual). B. (Repaid to Imperial Treasury) †£2,000,000 (estimate). IV. A. (Repaid to Imperial Treasury) £1,600,000 (estimate). B. (Repaid to Imperial Treasury) †£1,800,000 (estimate). C. (Repaid to Imperial Treasury) £600,000 (estimate). Total £26,482,700.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. BUCHANAN: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will have placed in the Library the Transvaal Master and Servants Law, 1880, Law No. 3 of 1885, and the Peace Preservation Ordinance, 1903, or the sections of these Acts referred to in Clause 32 of the Draft Labour Ordinance.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) Copies will be placed in the Library.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Artillery Volunteers Armament.

MR. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what steps are being taken towards the re-armament of the mobile batteries of the Artillery Volunteers.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): Forty-four batteries have been armed with the 4·7 inch gun—total 176 guns. The re-armament of the remaining eighty-one batteries with fifteen pounders has been commenced by the issue of forty-eight of these guns from reserves; and further issues will be made as these guns become available when the field artillery is re-armed.

Indian Administrative Reforms.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the statement of the Viceroy in his Budget speech of 25th

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† These two amounts include a sum of £500,000, an advance repaid to the Imperial Treasury.

March, 1903, that he hoped to deal in the ensuing year with the question of the separation of judicial and executive functions; and whether he can state what decision has been arrived at upon the Memorial of 1st July, 1899, presented to the Secretary of State on the subject in August, 1899.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I understand that the subject is still under consideration by the Government of India.

Labour Statistics for the Transvaal Mines.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will give separately the numbers of white men and Kaffirs employed in and about gold and coal mines respectively in the Transvaal in January, or at the last available date for which the figures are available.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): In November, the latest month for which I have complete Returns, the numbers were as follows:—Whites in gold mines 12,703, whites in coal mines 469, coloured in gold mines 65,552, coloured in coal mines 7,626, or a total, including metallurgical works, diamond mines, etc., of 13,419 white and 74,299 coloured.

Chinese Labour for the Transvaal—Wages.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the rate of wages to be paid to the Chinamen proposed to be imported into the Transvaal; how this rate will compare with those paid to miners in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Nevada; and whether he can lay upon the Table any official correspondence or reports from our self-governing colonies showing the grounds of their objection to the importation of Chinese labour.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am not aware what rate of wages will be paid. The correspondence referred to will be found in the recently published Parliamentary Paper Command 1895.

Transvaal Imported Labour Ordinance.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, before sanction is given to the Transvaal Imported Labour Ordinance, he will secure that regulations shall be made assuring to all Chinese labourers who may be recruited for the Transvaal mines the right to be accompanied by their wives and children if they so desire, on terms similiar to those that would apply to the labourers themselves.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have already stated that it is my intention to take precautions that all reasonable facilities shall be given for the introduction of the families of labourers, and the regulations will be framed with the object of giving effect to that intention. I am unable, however, to give the pledge which the hon. Member desires, as the preparation of the regulations will occupy a considerable time.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what is the purport of the laws which are specified in Section 35 of the draft of the Transvaal Labour Importation Ordinance, the provisions of which would not apply to Asiatic labourers imported into the Transvaal.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The first law is one to regulate the relative rights and duties of masters, servants, and apprentices. The second law is printed in translation with an amending law at page 57 of Cd. 7911 and is the law of the late Republic as to Coolies and Asiatics. Copies of the laws to which the hon. Member refers will be placed in the Library of the House.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there are any mines in the British Empire worked by indentured foreign labour under conditions similar to those proposed in the Transvaal Ordinance.

*MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies will it be legal, under Section 10 of draft Ordinance, for an importer of labour to convey, for a money consideration, his rights over imported labourers to another licensed person.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The hon. Member will see that Section 10 of the draft Ordinance is replaced by Section 11 in the amended Ordinance given in Cd. 1898 which provides adequate safeguards.

MR. BUCHANAN: If any further Amendments are introduced into the Ordinance on the Third Reading or before that stage, will they be laid on the Table before the debate takes place here?

*MR. LYTTELTON: Certainly.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the Report, printed as Appendix I. to the Blue-book entitled Further Correspondence relating to the Affairs of the Transvaal, etc., presented to Parliament last week, which purports to be a reprint of the Report presented by the Chamber of Mines of the Witwatersrand to the ex-Colonial Secretary at Johannesburg in January, 1903, is not identical with that Report, seeing that the paragraph which expressed the objection of the Rand mining industry to white unskilled labour on account of the danger of labour unions being formed has been omitted; and, if so, will he state whether this omission is accidental or intentional; and whether he will furnish this House with a copy of the Report in the form in which it was originally presented to the then head of the Colonial Office.

*MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir. The Report as published is identical with that forwarded by the Chamber of Mines to the Colonial Office as being the Report presented to Mr. Chamberlain. I think it possible that the hon. Member has overlooked the last paragraph on page 341 of the Blue-book to which he refers.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the paragraph omitted from this Blue-book appeared in *The Times* summary of the Report on 9th February last year, and that the version of the Report which has been sent over by the Inspector of Mines is not apparently the same as that presented to the Ex-Colonial Secretary?

[No answer was returned.]

Macedonian Reforms.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs have His Majesty's Government given attention to the declarations of the Bulgarian Prime Minister in the Sobranye on Saturday last, and have they now any information of the intention of Servia and Bulgaria to unite with the Macedonian insurgents in hostilities against Turkey; will His Majesty's Government now propose to the Powers signatories of the Treaty of Berlin to hold a Conference for considering the position of the Balkan provinces of Turkey, and for concerting the means of establishing therein a settled form of government.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): His Majesty's Government have seen in the Press a report of General Petroff's speech in the Sobranye on Saturday last. We have no reason to suppose that either Servia or Bulgaria contemplate a deliberate violation of territorial arrangements guaranteed by international treaty. The speech referred to expresses the sincere desire of the Bulgarian Government to contribute to the carrying out of the Mursteg programme and, so far as Servia is concerned, we understand that a public announcement has recently been made of the intention of that country to follow the lead of Austria and Russia, and to support so far as lies in her power the introduction of reforms. The establishment of a settled form of Government, by the removal of administrative abuses, is the object, and will, it is hoped, be the result, of the measures now in course of adoption in Macedonia.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Has the right hon. Gentleman anything to say in regard to the last paragraph of the Question as to the calling together of a Conference?

*EARL PERCY was understood to reply in the negative.

Lord Curzon's Visit to Bushire.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs did Lord Curzon at his recent visit to Bushire, insist that the Prince Governor General of Shiraz should come off in a boat to the Viceroy's ship, and accompany him to the shore, instead of receiving him on the beach as proposed; was this demand authorised by His Majesty's Government; and is it to be regarded as a precedent in future.

*Earl PERCY: The answer to the first paragraph of the Question is in the negative. I have already informed the hon. Member that Lord Curzon's action was unfortunately rendered necessary by the inadequacy of the arrangements locally made to carry out the hospitable intentions of His Majesty the Shah. Under these circumstances no question of precedent arises.

Central African Labourers in Transvaal Mines.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state how many of the 1,000 natives recruited last summer from the British Central Africa Protectorate for labour in the Transvaal mines have arrived at their destination, and the nature of their engagement and rate of pay.

*Earl PERCY: The number of natives who had arrived in the Transvaal at the beginning of this year was 818. The nature of their engagement and rate of pay will be found in Africa No. 2 (1903.)

Mr. WEIR: How many died.

*Earl PERCY: I cannot say exactly.

Government of the Soudan.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether arrangements have yet been made for candidates desirous of entering the service of the Government of the Soudan to undergo some educational test, especially as regards a knowledge of Arabic.

*Earl PERCY: Under the new system now in force the selection of candidates is determined by their educational qualifications, including, if possible, the possession of a University degree. At the expiry of a year from the date of selection they are required to pass an examination in Arabic.

Canton-Kowloon Railway.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, seeing that the British and Chinese Corporation were granted a preliminary agreement for the construction of the Canton-Kowloon Railway on the 28th March, 1898, will he state when the final agreement is expected to be concluded and the construction of the line proceeded with.

Earl PERCY: The preliminary Agreement for the construction of the Canton-Kowloon line was signed on the 28th March, 1898. We are informed by the British and Chinese Corporation that as soon as arrangements have been made for financing the Shanghai-Nanking Railway, negotiations for the conclusion of the final agreement for the construction of the Canton-Kowloon line will be proceeded with. The matter is receiving very careful attention.

Electricity in Mines.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any steps are being taken to prepare special rules for the purpose of regulating the use of electricity in mines, in accordance with the recommendations of the Departmental Committee.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's): The Report of the Committee on the use of electricity in mines is now before me, and I am considering the best steps to take with the view of establishing special rules in accordance with its recommendations.

Mr. TENNANT (Berwickshire): Will the Report be laid on the Table of the House?

*Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS: There can be no objection to that as far as I know. I think it has been done; if not, I will consider the point.

Christ's Hospital Site.

Mr. COHEN (Islington, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for the City of London (Sir Joseph Dimsdale) I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in arranging for the erection of buildings on the site of Christ's Hospital, he will, by means of lay-byes or otherwise, provide facilities for the increasing traffic of the Post Office service, so that the vehicles of the Department can be accommodated without adding to the congestion of the traffic in the neighbourhood surrounding the site.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Yes, Sir. In planning the buildings to be erected the object indicated by the hon. Member shall be kept in view.

Irish Railway Freights.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the cost of carriage of a ton of eggs to London from Denmark is 24s., from Russia 22s., and from Galway 94s.; and, if so, whether, in view of the dissatisfaction regarding the charges of Irish Railways, he will recommend the appointment of a Departmental or Viceregal Commission to inquire into and report upon the subject.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Wyndham, Dover): The Department of Agriculture is inquiring into the accuracy of the fact alleged in the first part of the Question. The third annual Report of the Department which was recently presented to Parliament and will be in the hands of hon. Members in a few days, contains an interesting account of the steps taken by the Department with a view to the reduction of railway rates in cases where its intervention was sought. These steps were followed by successful results in a number of instances. The Department is at present engaged in collecting information in respect to charges for the carriage of Irish and Continental agricultural produce, and the question of the necessity for further inquiry, as suggested, can best be decided when these investigations have been completed.

Russia Japanese War—Duties of Neutrals.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury have His Majesty's Government issued instructions to the authorities of British ports and coaling stations abroad, prescribing to them their conduct, in the event of war, towards belligerent ships of war; will such ships of war only be permitted in such ports to be supplied with so much coal as will suffice to take them to the nearest port of their own country, and no more; will they be prohibited from receiving any further supply of coal in any other British port until the expiration of three months from the date of the first supply; will their stay in such ports be restricted to twenty-four hours, except in the case of stress of weather or distress for necessary repairs; will such vessels be prohibited from bringing prizes into British ports; and will the same rules be enforced in the ports of the British self-governing Colonies. I will further ask whether, seeing that war has broken out, the Government will advise His Majesty to issue a proclamation of neutrality.

*Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS: As regards the Question on the Paper I have to say that instructions will be issued to the authorities at British ports, including those in self-governing colonies. They will be similar to the instructions issued on previous occasions. My hon. friend has correctly stated their effect. In regard to the further Question, a Council will be held to-morrow, at which the proclamation of neutrality will be approved, and a special Gazette will appear to-morrow with it.

OUT-DOOR RELIEF (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES) BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Friday, 25th March read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

[Seventh Day.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that one hole had been picked in the Resolution of his right hon. friend the Member for the Montrose Burghs by speakers on behalf of the Government. On his own side of the House hon. Members thoroughly understood the meaning of the opening words of the Amendment: "But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers." Hon. gentlemen opposite, however, complained that no explanation had been given of them and ridiculed their introduction. He attached the utmost importance to them. As to the fact about the declarations being conflicting there could be no doubt that no attempt had been made by hon. Members opposite to prove otherwise. The principal spokesman on behalf of the Government had laughed at the idea that these conflicting opinions had the smallest bearing upon our deliberations on the finances of the year. But what was the case? Those who sat on his side of the House were, and had always been, most strongly opposed to indirect taxation. Three years ago the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol made a statement on the subject of the relation of direct with indirect taxation. He then asserted that he might be able by a wise distribution of taxes to reach what he called a fair balance between them, and he hoped it would be maintained in the future. But last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer took off a far larger proportion of direct than of indirect war taxation, and he had in the recess pointed out to the country that we ought next to reduce the indirect taxation, which pressed most heavily on the poorer—the working classes of the community—that we ought to get rid of the war taxes on tea and sugar. What was the meaning then of the introduction of the words which speakers for the Government had ridiculed? It was simply that they saw from the declarations of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer that he, and the majority of the Cabinet who agreed with him, and who agreed with the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham would not attempt the reduction of these taxes this year because they wished to keep them in hand as a future gift with which to sweeten the unpopular taxation on bread and meat to which they were favourable. The speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to which he had referred went to show that there would be no surplus in this year's Budget. He had told them there would be no reduction of military expenditure to which the Government pledged themselves last year, and that it was only to be looked forward to a year hence. What was the object of that? It surely was to prepare the country for the fact that there would be no reduction of indirect taxation. If, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman had omitted to offer the House any explanation of these opening words, it was because those who sat on the Opposition side found perfectly clear, without explanation, words which apparently hon. Members opposite declared to be incomprehensible. He had alluded to the declarations of the Government as conflicting, and had assumed that there could be no doubt on that point. It had been said, however, that there had been a repudiation, or a recantation made in the course of the debate. He confessed that the recantation was so thin that he could not see it, nor could he believe or trust in it as a policy. The President of the Board of Trade had expressed his opinions pretty freely, but were those opinions entertained by the overwhelming majority of the Cabinet? He was, clearly, still an adherent of the main point of the Birmingham programme, for he said in answer to an interruption that he would be glad to see a moderate tax on food.

The Prime Minister had gone back on that programme on one point, from which, as he understood, other members of the Cabinet had not receded. Last year he expressed his complete concurrence with the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, not only as to the necessity of preference and a tax on bread and meat, but he also agreed that the reform was urgent and of Imperial necessity, and that the means suggested by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham were the only means of securing the end in view. The word "only" was important. At Manchester, however, the Prime Minister stated that he had "changed his opinion." Then he said that while he still held to all he had said upon fiscal union, he was not sure now that it was the only direction in which closer union might be sought, and he then went on to discuss the proposals put forward by the right hon. Member for Huntingdonshire. That was a complete giving away of the situation of urgency for the taxes on bread and meat. What he was anxious to know was, whether the Government followed the Prime Minister in this very essential alteration of the programme. It was an alteration which made the whole difference between mere speculative or academic consideration of the subject such as had gone on for the last thirty or forty years, and the treatment of it as a Parliamentary and electoral question. If the Government adhered to the declaration of the Prime Minister, then the right hon. Gentleman would have succeeded—to use an American phrase—in "side-tracking" the right hon. Member for West Birmingham by shunting his express train into a siding while the Government's slow luggage train rumbled past. The declaration welcomed by the free-fooders in that debate was contained in the words that even if the Government obtained a mandate at the next general election they would not be entitled by it to carry out a policy of preference. But the President of the Board of Trade, after making that declaration, went on to deal with the question of urgency, and in response to an interruption he said that urgency was created when the Colonies offered us a preference at the Conference two years ago. But if this was still an Imperial policy as well as urgent, he should like to know to which portion of the Empire urgency applied. India had established, without difference of opinion, that it was totally inapplicable there. The Blue-book just issued was full of most admirable information by which the Government of India, apparently with the concurrence of the Government at home, conclusively established the utter inapplicability of the whole principle to India. It was also inapplicable to our tropical colonies. Australia had never asked for it and had never offered it, and the first thing the Australian Government did last year was to pledge itself not to make any such proposal. That pledge had been renewed since the general elections. There remained only New Zealand and Canada, for South Africa at present was out of the question, as she was importing food and likely to continue doing so for a considerable period. If the urgency was then so great as it affected those colonies, how could the Government resist the demand for a dissolution to obtain the opinion of the country?

In the course of the debate there had been some interesting exchanges of words across the gangway opposite, and he listened with great interest to these intellectual diversions. In one of them the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich, who combined, in a degree never before probably attained in Parliament, eloquence of speech with the power of making most disagreeable interruptions, remarked that they had Conservative Members opposed by Cabinet Ministers. The President of the Board of Trade, who was always much more frank in answer to interruptions than when speaking in measured language, replied that the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was much more easy to attack than the Government policy. That was a complete explanation of the remarkable shifts of attitude on the Ministerial side which had been witnessed. The hon. Member for Oldham, who had contributed so much valuable material to the discussion on this question, interrupted the President of the Board of Trade by saying that the policy of the Prime Minister was not very important because it was not the issue before the country. To that the right hon. Gentleman replied that it was the policy before the country, although there was an organised conspiracy to represent the issue as one between free trade and protection. That he absolutely denied. It was useless to say that the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham was not the issue before the country in the face of the assertions of the right hon. Member himself. The peroration of every one of the speeches delivered by the right hon. Gentleman in his campaign, since the 20th May last, put that forward as the urgent issue on which the opinion of the country would have to be taken at the next general election. How could the Government pretend it was not the issue when the programme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was supported by the private opinion of almost every member of the Cabinet? In his speech the President of the Board of Trade placed the members of the Government in four categories. First there were the free importers. They were not very numerous, indeed, probably the Postmaster-General would stand in that class alone. Then there were those in favour of the Government policy of retaliation; thirdly, there were those who followed the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, in favour of preference, including probably every member of the Government except the Postmaster-General; and lastly, there were the protectionists. Of course there were no avowed protectionists in the Government. The President of the Board of Trade defined protection and distinguished it from defence. What he himself would call protectionists must, he suppose, be described as those who advocated defensive measures—the President of the Local Government Board, the President of the Board of Agriculture, and the Secretary to the Board of Trade. It was a new doctrine, striking at the root of Ministerial responsibility, that the Parliamentary Secretary of a Board should, in matters which were the direct concern of the Board, maintain a policy different from that of the head of his Department. Such a thing had never been known before, but it was not the least painful or ridiculous feature of the Government's present position. Usually a Secretary followed the directions of his President or resigned. There was an old Provencal saying, written on the base of a statue of Jason in a great fortress in the Mediterranean, which, translated, read—

> "How happy are you, Jason, to possess two jaws.
> With one you can eat, with the other drink, without pause."

The words might be adapted to the Board of Trade at the present moment, whose representatives in the House spoke with such different voices. Both of them supported officially, no doubt, the Government programme of retaliation, and both very probably privately supported the programme of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham for taxing meat and bread; but one came to the House and made a speech full of highly protectionist arguments which the other most expressly repudiated. That was absolutely unprecedented.

The President of the Board of Trade in his speech developed a very interesting definition of protection. He said that there was great ambiguity in the word, and he drew a distinction between defensive duties and protection. There was not a protectionist manufacturer on the Continent who, when asked to consent to the lowering of duties on goods he was interested in, did not use the argument that because they had conscription in their country they ought to be protected against us. The Secretary to the Board of Trade sympathised with protection, while the President of the Board of Trade declared that it was not protection—it was only defence against an unfair advantage—accorded to the foreigner. With regard to the proposal of a 10 per cent. duty, the Government spoke of it as if it were a uniform duty of 10 per cent. imposed for revenue. It was nothing of the kind. The President of the Board of Trade could not have read the speeches of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham or the terms of the invitation to the Tariff Commission. The duty was to be one averaging 10 per cent., so that it might vary from nothing to 60 per cent. It was not, as the President of the Board of Trade represented, a duty for revenue purposes only; and it was the extremes and not the average that must be considered. If he had the fortune to be a member of the Commission now sitting on the subject, he would put 60 per cent. on everthing he wanted to keep out, and nothing on everything he wanted to use in the course of his employment or trade. Then the average of 10 per cent. would disappear into space. The Secretary of the Board of Trade had no concern with the revenue argument; he was thinking of our distressed industries. The President of the Board of Trade was a sort of 20th century Cobden, pursuing what he thought would be Cobden's methods were he living to-day, and meeting, he said, in the course of his struggles with a resuscitated demon who was likely to thwart his efforts. He might, in passing, observe that the two sides of the House differed as to who the demon was. The Secretary to that Board of Trade was one of the few people who believed in the value of the Canadian preference.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): Everyone does.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the Board of Trade did not believe in it at the time of the conference.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): Can the right hon. Baronet read any passage declaring against it?

*SIR CHARLES DILKE replied that both the Board of Trade and the then Colonial Secretary explained at the conference that it had been a grievous disappointment. But that was not his point to which he was coming.

MR. BONAR LAW: I said that while our rise was £4,000,000 the German rise was £1,000,000.

SIR CHARLES DILKE said he then asked what were the percentages, but the question was not answered. The hon. Member further said that until we got preference our trade with Canada was going down; after preference our trade continued to increase. But in the year ending 30th June, 1897, before preference, the percentage of the total imports into Canada which came from the United Kingdom was 27·58, whereas in 1902 it was only 24·95.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Is the right hon. Baronet aware that the British and Irish exports to Canada rose from £5,000,000 in 1897 to £10,000,000 in 1902?

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that that had nothing to do with his point. The Canadian preference, which was the only one worth considering, so evidently broke down that it was the very ground on which the right hon. Member for West Birmingham edged off preference, and in his speech at Glasgow and Greenock developed a new argument of a *quid pro quo* for the manufacturers of this country. His point was that the Colonies would not start new industries in competition with those of the mother country—a very old and very dangerous *quid pro quo*, but one which would undoubtedly have been valuable. It was that more than anything else that led to the secession of the United States. But that suggestion had now gone. Everyone who knew the Colonies knew that it would go the day after they heard of it. He agreed with the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich in his very careful examination of the Australian and other figures, an examination which established beyond the possibility of a doubt that this question did not touch India or the Crown Colonies, but Canada alone. That examination went to show how small was the margin of trade into which we could hope to cut under an artificial system of the kind proposed. The opponents of the new policy were not fighting against hypothetical retaliation in some future Parliament, at some distant date, but against a practical policy of protection put before the country with as much power as any policy had ever been put, with the complete applause, except in Lancashire, of the governing bodies of most of the Conservative constituencies. They were fighting against that policy which overshadowed the policy of the Government, and in fighting against it they were fighting against the opinions entertained by almost every individual member of the Cabinet. The Colonial Secretary in a recent speeh took a hint from the right hon. Gentlemen the Member for West Birmingham as to a new necessity for protection. He might call it a defensive rather than a protectionist policy, but it was indistinguishable from protection. Then there was the fact that a leading member of the Government had gone to a constituency to oppose and attack a Conservative Member who supported the policy of the Government as officially announced. The President of the Local Government Board contradicted the statement of the mover of the Amendment with reference to the matter, but what occurred was that the right hon. Gentleman acted as godfather or sponsor to a candidate whom he was bringing out to oppose the hon. Member for the Chippenham Division of Wiltshire on the ground that the latter had opposed the policy of the Government on education, the Army, and the fiscal question. As to education, the hon. Baronet had voted for one Amendment—a sign of independence to be commended rather than condemned.

Sir J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham) intimated that he simply delivered a speech.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said that that was an even smaller offence. As to the Army, everybody opposed the Government policy; the Government themselves opposed it. They had now reversed it. Therefore, the fiscal question alone remained, and it was on that question that the hon. Baronet was opposed in his constituency, and a rival candidate brought out by a prominent member of the Cabinet. In the speech complained of the President of the Local Government Board said—

> "Sir Audley Neeld, as at present advised, was not in favour of taxing bread and meat . . . but it was not certain that at a later date he would not be in favour of the fuller and wider policy."

That was simply another case of the adoption of the "at present" of the correspondence between the Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. But that "fuller and wider policy" was not the policy of the Government as avowed in this House. Moreover, the scheme constituted an unworthy appeal on different grounds to different classes of electors, for, while hopes of assistance were held out to decaying industries, the labourers were told that the candidate was against taxing bread and meat.

Then there was the new departure of the Colonial Secretary, who developed at great length his policy of protection or defence on account of the labour conditions being more favourable and more costly in this country than abroad. The right hon. Gentleman cited a number of Acts of Parliament from which he appeared to think foreign manufacturers were free. He referred to legislation affecting child labour in factories, the Coal Mines Regulations Acts, the Railway Regulation Acts, the Workmen's Compensation Act, and the Combination Act giving liberty to trades unions. What were the facts? With regard to many aspects of child labour foreign nations were in advance of this country, and there was about to be held an international conference on the subject at which he hoped His Majesty's Government would be represented, although they had not yet announced that they would be. As to the Railway Regulation Acts, the American Acts were enormously in advance of ours. Then, too, the Combination Laws in many countries were in advance of ours as now declared by the courts. But the main items were the factories and workshops legislation, workmen's compensation, and the law of truck. As a matter of fact, truck did not affect the question, but the laws affecting it were better abroad than here, and the Colonial Secretary had just sanctioned in South Africa the most appalling system of truck the world had ever seen. The House of Commons was not the place for a detailed examination of the small points in such legislation, but with regard to the compensation principle it was overwhelmingly and triumphantly proved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham himself that the charge was so infinitesimal that it was utterly ridiculous for capitalists to urge that it could produce any ground whatever for protection. At that time Germany alone had only the compensation law, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was taking what he described as short and halting steps in the direction of such legislation. Since then not only had the German legislation been maintained, but France had passed a law greatly in advance of ours, and under which the benefits were double the benefits under the English law, as was proved by the insurance statistics. Then Belgium, hitherto the most backward nation in labour legislation, had passed a law in advance even of the French. As to factory legislation, in many points foreign countries were in advance of this country, notably in respect of dangerous trades. Generally speaking, foreign countries had drawn closer to us in those points in which previously they were behind, and in many points they were now considerably ahead. The Radicals thought the prosperity argument had been pushed too far, for it was one which struck at the very root of Radicalism, of which the foundation lay in the sufferings of the people. They knew of those sufferings which stood in need of drastic remedies. They were convinced that the remedies now proposed were foolish remedies which would increase and intensify those sufferings.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Oh, no.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: The first to turn the prosperity argument against them would be the hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield. They could not urge too strongly that the prosperity argument was a dangerous one which would be turned against them. All free-traders believed that the suggested remedies would be ten times worse in a period of depression, and they asked the Government to take the opinion of the country before doing anything in this direction. The Government ought to come out into the open and declare their policy. They ought to take the opinion of the country, and when a dissolution came those who opposed any alteration would appeal with confidence to the common sense of the democracy.

*MR. RITCHIE (Croydon): When my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade rose to reply to the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment he characterised the Amendment as an expedient, and he applied to it an adjective which he afterwards withdrew. No doubt it was an expedient, and I am bound to say I thought at the time that it was a bad expedient from the right hon. Gentleman's point of view; that is to say, if his desire was, as my right hon. friend seemed to suppose it was, to obtain votes from this side of the House, because it is clear that there are Members on this side of the House who may be in agreement with the right hon. Gentleman's views, and yet are not disposed to support an Amendment of this kind, because it is, and always will be, considered as a Motion of want of confidence in the Government. Therefore, from the right hon. Gentleman's point of view I think it was a bad expedient; but at the same time I quite sympathise with him in his desire to obtain a speedy discussion on one of the most momentous and important subjects it is possible to bring before the House of Commons. I am one of those who regret, and regret very greatly, that the House of Commons was not afforded an adequate opportunity last session of discussing the question. I may say with regard to my feelings on the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman that I agree with every word of it. There is nothing in it from which I dissent. I agree with all the propositions he puts in it. I imagine that the preamble to the Resolution is an insignificant part of the Resolution, and in all probablity did not at one time form a portion of the Resolution. At any rate, the right hon. Gentleman put it in as a preamble. Well, Sir, I had to consider what should be my attitude towards an Amendment of this kind with which I entirely agree. I had to consider whether or not I should take the step of voting for it even if it did imply a vote of want of confidence; and I came to the conclusion that, before coming to a definite resolution, it would be necessary, and indeed, only proper, that I should hear from the Government Bench a declaration of their policy with regard to this matter; and I say at once that I listened with great satisfaction to the bulk of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. It seemed to me that it was the speech of a free-trader, and I believe, for myself, that the right hon. Gentleman is a free-trader. He has no doubt got some unhappy surroundings, but I believe that he is at heart a free-trader. I was not surprised, therefore, to hear from him what was undoubtedly a free-trade speech. But his speech caused some consternation on some of the Benches near where I am sitting; and because of the consternation that it caused, and because of the speech itself, I felt after it was delivered that it might be possible for me to support the right hon. Gentleman. I have said that the speech caused consternation, and because of that consternation I imagine it was thought politic that some other member of the Government who was free from the charge of being a free trader, and against whom no such charge could be made, should rise and endeavour to do away with the consternation which was caused by the speech of my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade. And I confess that, after having listened to that other speech, I felt myself to be quite at sea as to what the policy of the Government really was. Not that it is remarkable that in dealing with this question the Government should have two voices. On the contrary, during all the time that this question has been discussed in the country, they have spoken, not only with two, but with several voices. But I confess I was somewhat astonished that the Secretary to the Board of Trade should get up and make a speech which was, as I am sure everybody who heard it must consider it, a protectionist speech from a convinced protectionist. Before I make up my mind conclusively on the subject of the action which I shall take, I must hear some further declarations from the Government, and I trust that they may be such as will not compel me at last to go into the lobby against them, as I should be very unwilling to do. My hon. friend, as I have said, made a protectionist speech. It was an elaborate attack on free trade. It was a strong plea for protection. The hon. Gentleman considered that Cobden's expectations had been falsified. Cobden would have been the greatest of all prophets I have ever heard of if all his expectations had been fulfilled. But does my hon. friend think that if Cobden could possibly return to this sphere he would be a dissatisfied man? Would he not look around and see a mercantile fleet that covers the sea, a commerce that is the envy of the world, wealth beyond the dreams of avarice, pauperism decreased by 50 per cent., the wages of the working classes and their social condition enormously improved, and the comfort and well-being of the people luxurious compared to what it was in Cobden's time? I venture to say that Cobden in his wildest dreams never contemplated a higher state of prosperity than that which is enjoyed by this country and all its inhabitants.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: What about the unemployed?

*Mr. RITCHIE: The unemployed? I should like the hon. Gentleman to make himself acquainted with the state of employment at the time of Cobden. I should like him to compare the condition of the dwellings of the working classes in the time of Cobden with what it is now. I should like him to compare the wages of any labouring class in Cobden's time with the wages of the same class now. I would ask him to look back at the purchasing power of money in Cobden's time and compare it with the purchasing power of money now, and to judge for himself whether a case has not been made out that Cobden in his wildest dreams never contemplated. It has become the fashion in some quarters to consider Cobdenism and the followers of Cobden as a reproach, as something to be sneered at. I avow, at any rate, regardless of those sneers, that I have no objection to be called one of those who admire and reverence the great work which Mr. Cobden did. My hon. friend told us that Cobden laid a demon, and that the demon had risen again. I think the demon has risen again in the guise of a protecting angel. [AN HON. MEMBER: He comes from Sheffield.] My hon. friend said that the demon, in the shape of foreign countries, said to us, "You may buy from us, but you shall not sell to us." How can we buy if we do not sell? My hon. friend may have, and no doubt he has, a considerable knowledge of a certain branch of industry, but he has very little knowledge of economics if he fancies that we can possibly be buyers and not sellers. Sir, he gave some figures which, according to him, proved that we do not sell although we buy; but in arriving at these figures he omitted all reference to our services. He took no account of the remittance of interest or the movement of capital. Anyone who attempts to draw comparisons without taking these things into account does not understand the elements of the movement of merchandise. Look at America. My hon. friend asked how is it that their exports exceed the imports. That was received with ringing cheers by many Gentlemen on this side of the House. Has he never heard of the enormous indebtedness of America to all Europe? Does he not know that from 1897 to 1899 America was an enormous purchaser of securities in Europe? Last year they again largely increased their purchases, and have been borrowing largely in our market. How has the interest on all that money been paid? By the export of goods. Not only that but the borrowing by the United States in this country and other parts of Europe has been at a much higher rate of interest than before. Money which they were able to get at 3 per cent., or a little over, they have to pay 5 per cent. for now. All that increase of interest having to be remitted has increased their exports.

The hon. Gentleman made another statement to the effect that exports last year rose, but employment fell. It is quite true the home market is not so good as it was. Can anybody be surprised? Does anyone imagine that we can spend two or three hundred millions of money on unproductive work, without this telling upon the purchasing power of the people? Of course, we have had very dear money. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, when he spoke at the Guildhall, asked how it happened that money was almost for the first time dearer in London than on the Continent? Someone at once replied, "The war." I am not saying anything against the war. I am only stating the fact that we cannot expect our home market, until the strain that has been brought to bear on the people of this country is somewhat mitigated, to be as good as it was. High taxation and dear money must tell on the home market. But in addition to that municipal work is postponed. Municipalities who have work to do, do not want to go into the market and borrow at the heavy rate they would have to pay now, and they defer carrying on work to some time when they hope they may be able to borrow more cheaply in the money market. That leads to want of employment. And so it is with regard to companies and individuals. Everybody who knows commercial matters knows that companies are not forming as they were, and that enterprise has been checked for the moment. All these things tend, of course, somewhat to make the home market bad. But what do the figures for 1903 show? That though the home trade is bad, foreign trade has been good. Why have foreign exports risen? Because, in consequence of bad harvests, we had to import more wheat. And I recommend this to the hon. Gentleman, who does not seem to think that imports and exports have any very great correlation. Notwithstanding the bad trade here, and in consequence in my opinion of the larger imports of food we required, more exports had necessarily to be sent out. My. hon. friend led us to imagine, though he did not exactly say so in so many words, that he thought large imports meant large unemployment of our people. Now I assert quite the contrary, and I refer him to his own Blue-book, which I am sorry has not been subjected to examination by independent experts on the part of the Government, either in the shape of a Royal Commission or otherwise, so that the figures might have been digested and put into some form easily "understanded of the people." But many things are easily found there, and what is found with regard to employment? In 1889 imports beat the record, The import of manufactured goods rose to £100,000,000. According to the Secretary of the Board of

Trade this must have produced a record of unemployment. It did produce a record, but it was a record for the goodness of employment. The number of unemployed fell to 2.1 per cent. I assert that this is the lowest possible figure to which unemployment could go. When hon. Gentlemen think of the number of men who are sick, or who, either from one cause or another, are temporarily prevented from working, I think they will consider that 2 per cent. of unemployment is the least we could possibly expect. Well, Sir, imports fell off, and unemployment rose. In 1893 imports of manufactured articles fell to £98,000,000, and unemployment rose to 7½ per cent. From 1893 to 1900 imports of manufactures rose steadily and the number of unemployed declined in almost exact proportion.

MR. BONAR LAW: I am sorry to interrupt my hon. friend, but he has entirely misunderstood the argument I was trying to put before the House. I began by saying it was unfair to use a single year as an indication of the state of our trade. I said that if you do insist on taking that single year, you will find that exports have a greater bearing than imports—I expressly said nothing more —upon the prosperity of trade. Nothing further than that.

*MR. RITCHIE: The hon. Member at that time was speaking about employment. I am not taking one single year, I am taking several years, and I assert that in the years between 1893 and 1900 the imports of manufactured articles rose steadily and the number of unemployed declined steadily in almost exact proportion. In 1896 the imports were £117,500,000 and the unemployed 3½ per cent. In 1899 the imports were £136,000,000 and the unemployed 2½ per cent.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: May I ask my right hon. friend if the statistics of unemployment to which he refers do not relate only to the most skilled artisans of the country reporting through the trade unions to the Board of Trade, and not to the state of employment as a whole? Will he also give the figures for 1903?

*MR. RITCHIE: I do not happen to have these figures. The question he puts to me as to the returns, I can only answer by saying that the only means by which we can get an idea of the unemployed is from the returns of the trade-unions, but the hon. Gentleman surely knows that if the trade unionists who are skilled artisans are employed, this must necessarily imply that a corresponding number of those who work with them in the trades with which they are connected must be employed. May I say also that large imports have been marked by an extraordinary decline in emigration? I would advise the House not to believe that an abundance of necessaries is bad. But will unemployment be decreased by protection? That is the great point. How about protected countries? Their state of unemployment is probably much worse than ours. What would protection do? It would decrease our purchasing power and so damage the home market. It would cripple us in our competition in foreign markets, and make everything dearer, and I should like to know whether that is at all likely to help us in our competition with the other nations of the world. Some say "Look at Germany; that protective country has increased exports to a greater extent than we have done." It is true that Germany is making great strides. There is a great deal of enterprise and skill in Germany; but there are other causes at work. Does the House imagine that the export trade of Germany is altogether a profitable trade? I very much doubt whether it is, and, after all, the question of profit or not in the export trade is very material. There is no doubt that the Government in Germany does lend a hand to trade—to the expansion of trade, which we in our system do not. Government railways, whether in Germany or abroad, in China or elsewhere, are made of German material, and by Germans. Whether that is advantageous to German trade in the Colonies and elsewhere is probably a different matter. But take German private enterprise. Look at the education of students. How is it that they have such an enormous expansion of their electrical industries in South America and elsewhere? It is very largely because every great manufacturer in Germany strives to provide himself with young men who have been scientifically educated, and who do much to keep manufactures on proper scientific lines. Now I have been told that at Owens College, where education of a similar character is given, there is absolutely no home demand for the students who go up to that college. And I am told that the great demand for the young men who come from Owens College is not from this country, but from the United States. My hon. friend in talking about exports asked us, I think, to exclude raw materials, and I suppose he meant coal. Now, why should we exclude coal? Is he afraid of the supply running short? I do not know whether the Royal Commission that has been sitting on the subject of our coal supply has yet reported; but I have good reason to believe that they will report that the supply of coal in this country is practically inexhaustible for a vast number of years. Suppose we were to put any impediment on the export of coal, are we going to do the same thing with everything that comes out of the earth, because, if we do, it will diminish the occupation of a vast number of people and strike a blow at our carrying trade.

I shall reserve further remarks on all these questions until I know from some other member of the Government what the views of the Government really are. But in the meantime I prefer to take the speech of the President to that of the Secretary to the Board of Trade. If we take the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, taxes on food, preferential tariffs, protective duties, and bounties—all are gone, and only retaliation remains. I agree with my noble friend who spoke last night that if that is all that is left of the Government policy it is a great pity that there should have been so much hubbub. Retaliation, however advisable it may be in some cases, is not a policy; it is only an expedient. It is not a policy to be emblazoned upon the banners of the Government, and in favour of which all the members of the Government are to go preaching a crusade. Of course we all acknowledge that there is nothing economically unsound about retaliation provided that Parliament is asked to decide in every case. That is absolutely essential; and I am sorry it is one of the subjects on which I have been able to obtain no information. It was my special duty, in discussing this question of retaliation with my colleagues, to inquire very closely into it, as, occupying the position I did, I should, perhaps, be more responsible than any other member of the Government. Therefore, while I had no hesitation about assenting to this expedient where it was shown that it could do us no harm, and that it would be effective, I felt bound to point out to my colleagues the difficulties in its application. And some of these difficulties I would like to refer to. But before I pass on to their consideration I must notice the remarks of my hon. friend on the tinplate industry. Well, no doubt that was a bad case. The tinplate industry suffered a good deal from the tax imposed in the United States under the Dingley tariff. But I am glad to say that the export trade in tinplates has very nearly recovered to what it was. But what was the effect of the high tariff on tinplates in the United States itself? It did enormous damage to the packing industry, which was diverted to other countries, while it greatly assisted trade in this country. I have no doubt that, although the export did fall off considerably, the consumption of tinplates in this country very greatly increased in consequence of their additional cost in the United States to all packing industries. I would have liked to ask my hon. friend when he was giving the illustration of that industry as to the power which the Government asked for—the power, viz., of retaliation—does he believe for a moment that any power of retaliation which we could possibly exercise would have had the smallest effect on the United States to prevent them passing the Dingley Tariff Bill? Of course he does not believe that, and I would remind him that the President of the Board of Trade stated the day before, that the United States was one of the countries to which we could not apply retaliation.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. GERALD BALFOUR (Leeds, Central): I said it would be more difficult to bring it to bear on the United States than on some other countries.

*MR. RITCHIE: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon, but that admission is sufficient for the House, and for my argument. One of the difficulties about retaliation is that we are far more vulnerable than any other country, because the bulk of our imports are not luxuries but the prime necessaries of life. And then our shipping is particularly open to attack. We are, of course, the great carrying power of the world, and if differential duties were put on our shipping it would be a vital blow to that industry. In considering the application of retaliation we should not leave that out of sight. My hon. friend said that the tariff wars which had occurred had been productive of good. My noble friend has given his answer on that question and has shown that the tariff war between France and Italy had caused a loss of £120,000,000, and, as was naturally to be expected, the markets being open to other countries, the trade between France and Italy had been greatly diverted into other channels. And once trade is so diverted, it is very difficult to get it back again. There is only one paragraph in the Report which I should like to read to the House, apart altogether from the question of pecuniary loss. The Report says—

"It disturbs the ancient and cordial industrial and commercial relations which have hitherto existed between the two countries."

I hope that in considering this question we will not leave out of account the disturbance of our industrial, commercial, and other relations, which would in all probability take place if we were unhappily to revert to the policy of retaliation. My right hon. friend states he did not say that it would be impossible to apply retaliation to Russia and the United States, but that it would be most difficult. Russia, however, is the greatest offender. The duty in Russia is 131 per cent. *ad valorem*—which, I should say, is barbarous and unfair. In the United States the duty is 73 per cent., and in Germany only 25 per cent. Are we to retaliate against Germany with a 25 per cent. duty, and not to be able to retaliate against Russia with a 131 per cent. duty? The McKinley tariff and the Dingley tariff inflicted great loss on our trade and industry beyond comparison, more severe than has ever been caused by any other protectionist measures. Are we to leave Russia with her tariff of 131 per cent. and the United States of America with their tariff of 73 per cent. alone, and retaliate against Germany with its 25 per cent.? Be it remembered that we do a vast and a most profitable trade with Germany. The system of free imports, as I think, and as my hon. friend the Member for Oldham has shown, has its own very effective machinery of retaliation, working under an inexorable law. Germany dumps ship-plates. Here we retaliate by selling the German ships, built of his own steel, at a price with which he cannot compete. The German dumps his steel and we retaliate by underselling his machinery. Take a single instance from the United States Consular Reports as an illustration.

"An English firm has just competed successfully as against German tenderers for the plant of the Municipal Gas Works at Copenhagen, and the cause of their success was this"—

I ask the House to note it—

"They have the command of the raw material dumped by Germans at a price lower than the German manufacturer could obtain it, and were consequently able to undersell him for the finished plant."

This is effective retaliation. My hon. friend the Secretary to the Board of Trade showed that the action of this country in connection with Germany's threat to Canada proves the efficiency of retalition. Well, I had something to do with the compilation of the despatch to Germany on that subject, and I am very glad to think that it had that effect. The hon. Gentleman said—

"It is an object lesson which, if properly understood, would establish the efficiency of retaliation."

But if that be so, it destroys the case for a mandate. If this can be done, as it can be done under existing circumstances, why put the country into a state of excitement by asking for a mandate?

Now, with regard to dumping, dumping may be very innocent, even welcome in some cases, but in other cases, when a great industry is really threatened, it should be resisted. But here the process is by no means easy. Where it is the result of bounties, as in sugar, it can, no doubt, be met, if expedient; but it may be individual dumping, and where it is individual dumping it is difficult to see how it can be effectually met. It would be difficult to impose a duty on one set of goods dumped and not on another set. We have not quite a free hand on this question of dumping. If we shut out dumped goods where do they go? They are not thrown into the sea. They must go elsewhere, and with what result? Take a case. The American dumper offers us for £90 what it would cost us £100 to produce. We refuse it, and it goes elsewhere. [An HON. MEMBER on the GOVERNMENT Benches: Where?] It can obtain entrance into protected countries notwithstanding their protection, but has the hon. Member never heard of neutral markets? Going elsewhere means competing with our export trade. Yes, and competing successfully. Because he is offering for £90 the same goods it costs us £100 to produce. In other words, for every £90 of dumped goods which we shut out we must lose £100 of our export trade. This is not all. The dumped goods are, in the main, only half manufactured, and the cheaper our manufacturers can buy them the cheaper they can turn out the finished produce, and the better chance of exporting it at a profit. If we shut out dumped goods we must be prepared to encounter competition from countries which are ready to take the cheapest raw material which dumping provides. There is another case which I saw in a Consular Report from Hamburg. Germans cannot buy their ships in Germany. They are buying their ships in England, made from their own iron, which they are unable to buy from German makers because of the price. The whole principle of dumping is to sell very dear at home and to sell very cheap abroad. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade has some experience of dumping, and has no doubt very considerable experience in large iron and steel operations, but others tell a different story. The right hon. Baronet opposite is prepared with a totally different story, and Mr. Hugh Bell, a great authority on the subject, also tells a different story. I am no defender of dumping where any of our industries is deliberately attacked. I stated that to my colleagues and to the Prime Minister. All I do say is that I do not believe you can devise anything to effectually dispose of dumping. But if there is an attack on any one of our great industries we should be bound to protect it. The question may be asked, "If you do not object to the principle of retaliation, and if you are prepared to deal with dumping, and if you would not remain content in a case where our Colonies were attacked in consequence of allowing us a preference, why did you resign? You are in agreement with the policy of the Government expressed by the President of the Board of Trade." Yes, but the policy of the Government when I left went much further than that. No doubt there was misunderstanding, and I will not enter into that except to say that in a case of that kind there should have been no possibility of misunderstanding. I ask any Gentleman who has been a member of a Cabinet whether he can conceive a Prime Minister's coming down to his Cabinet on such a vital question as that without disclosing his whole mind to all his Cabinet, so that they might be enabled to arrive at a conclusion on hearing the whole case? That is all I have to say on that point. I regret there was a misunderstanding, and in my opinion there ought to have been no room for misunderstanding.

Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton said he thought some explanation was desirable, and even necessary, from those Ministers who had resigned as to the cause of their resignations. I do not intend to say anything more on the very delicate and difficult question of what occurred at the moment of resignation; but I am bound to refer in this House to certain matters which preceded the final stage, because I have been subjected to a good deal of criticism—criticism which was often not correct and oftimes very unjust; and I feel bound to state to the House — what, indeed, I have said elsewhere on more than one occasion—the circumstances in which my colleagues and I began to diverge, The original proposal was that the corn tax should be used for preference. Naturally, before going to South Africa, my right hon. friend the late Colonial Secretary desired that the matter should be settled. Well, I declined. My right hon. friend went away in November. I declined to assent to the proposal for two reasons. First, I declined to make any forecast months beforehand of what I might be able to do at the time of introducing the Budget. I never heard of such a thing being done before. I have been in Cabinets for many years and I have listened while Chancellors of the Exchequer propounded their proposals, but I have never heard of a Chancellor of the Exchequer being asked to settle in November what he was going to do at the next Budget. But, of course, my main objection was one of policy. I felt, though it seemed a small matter, it was the beginning of one of very great importance and leading, in my opinion, to taxation of food of all kinds, and ultimately, if it were to be acceptable to the Colonies, of raw material. That was bound to lead to protection. My right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade suggested it would be possible to be in favour of preference and yet opposed to protection. I differ from him. If, by a tax, corn is protected it will be impossible to refuse a demand for the protection of all other industries. I will do the late Colonial Secretary the justice to say that he did not disguise at all that it was a policy satisfactory for the moment, but mainly satisfactory as a promise of other things to come. For these reasons I declined to assent to the corn tax being used for the inauguration of a preferential and protective tariff, at least without the country being consulted. When the late Colonial Secretary returned a final decision had to be taken. Now, my right hon. friend, very unfairly I consider, in a speech he made somewhere, charged me with "rushing" my colleagues on the subject. We were compelled to choose, he said, between agreeing to the proposal to abolish the corn tax and accepting the resignation of our Chancellor of the Exchequer, and we could not lose him the day before the Budget. Well, if I had been guilty of conduct of that kind I should properly have deserved reprobation. It would have been perfectly unjustifiable to have put a pistol to the head of my colleagues and say, "Either abandon preference or I go" twenty-four hours before I had to deal with the Budget. That would have been monstrous conduct on my part. My right hon. Friend returned on 14th March, a Cabinet Council was held on 25th March, the Budget Council on 31st March, another Cabinet Council on 22nd April, and the Budget was introduced on 23rd April. The whole of that time my colleagues, and, indeed, the Prime Minister long before, were in possession of my firm determination not to remain in office if the corn tax was to be used for preference. I have said that incorrect statements were made about this, and my attention has been drawn to the *resumés* of the year which appeared in *The Times* and *Standard*, in which it was stated that I said I would resign if the corn tax was not taken off. That was not the case. If my colleagues had not agreed with me about the remission of the corn tax it is not a subject upon which I should have considered myself at all justified in resigning. What I did say was that I would not as Chancellor of the Exchequer inaugurate this preferential movement, which I considered fraught with the gravest danger, however much I desired to draw this country into closer union with the Colonies, and if my colleagues thought otherwise then they would have to find another Chancellor of the Exchequer. Then began the fiscal campaign, during which preference blossomed into protection pure and simple; speeches were made in that direction in and out of Parliament, and pamphlets by the million were distributed under the supervision of my right hon. friend. I know that the Prime Minister thought that this kind of thing might go on and not break up the Cabinet. But that was not my opinion; in my opinion the position would have been intolerable. I considered it necessary as Chancellor of the Exchequer to come to the House and repudiate in the strongest terms any association with the proposals which were being made by the late Colonial Secretary throughout the length and breadth of the land. The fiscal campaign proceeded. There was no evidence whatever put before myself or my colleagues who had resigned their offices that preference and food taxation had been definitively abandoned, and—this is one of the strongest points—no evidence before us that the Colonial Secretary was not to continue his campaign. In these circumstances nothing remained for me or my colleagues, if we were to retain our self-respect, but to resign our offices. Party loyalty would have prompted me to submit to much, but where I believe that the interests and well-being of the country are inconsistent with adhesion to Party I cannot hesitate as to the course it is my duty to adopt. At any sacrifice to myself, what I believe to be the interest of the country must prevail. There is no other course open to a public man if public life is to remain pure, as, thank God, it has hitherto been in this country. Great as have been the sacrifices my friends and I have had to make—and how great they have been only those who have made such sacrifices can thoroughly appreciate—I am glad to think that in the result they have not been made in vain.

*MR. RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth) said he thought the proposals made by the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich on the previous evening, when he offered to refrain from voting against them, on condition that the Government should discipline their Party, and put pressure on the Conservative organisations throughout the country to suppress the opinion of the great majority of the Party in the interests of a small minority, offered very little reward to the Government for the course he suggested they should take. The hon. Member for the Colne Valley had on the previous day indicated that, so far as he knew, the iron and steel trade was in a flourishing condition. The hon. Member was associated with a branch of that industry which was not prosperous, that was to say, in the manufacture of steel rails. Now, most of the rails made in the United Kingdom were made in North Lancashire and in West Cumberland, and at the present moment that industry was depressed. Thousands of persons engaged in that manufacture were now in poverty and want, employment not having been possible in more than one month out of the last three. Along the coast there are fifty blast furnaces, not more than one-third in full blast. Each of these furnaces means £20,000 a year to railway companies for carriage, as well as large sums in wages to ore and coal miners, brick-makers and scores of minor industries. English manufacturers—who had found markets in Russia, Germany, France, and America—had been driven out of all such markets by hostile tariffs. They had next transferred their goods to Canada, South Africa and to South America; and now our manufacturers, owing to depression in the United States, were driven forth once more in search of new markets. Without these export markets we could not give permanent employment to those engaged in the steel and iron trade. Dumping was perhaps more prejudicial to British manufacturers in neutral markets, where they might expect fair play, than it was in the home market. No ingenuity on the part of British manufacturers, no plant, however modern and up to date, would enable them to overcome a tariff wall which was expressly designed to exclude them from a market. If the Government could show him how, by retaliation, they could remove the effect of those tariff walls he should be quite satisfied to rest there. It was a real danger that we might, step by step, market after market, lose the outlet for those manufactures which were the very life of our industrial population, and he viewed with considerable concern the effect which the deliberate policy of foreign and, if they liked, of Colonial Governments was having upon the exclusion of our manufactures from the markets of the world. Traders and manufacturers wanted to secure a wider market, a freer trade. The Government had to look out and find fresh markets for our industries. We read in the papers that so much gold had been shipped from South Africa to London and that so many American heiresses had arrived in the Metropolis. They were interesting announcements, no doubt, but it was small comfort to the working man or his family who could buy no bread because their employment was gone owing to foreign dumping in our markets. What they wanted was free trade everywhere, but, like the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, he was in no sense a bigoted free trader. He should like to see outputs growing and spreading every day, for they must recollect that our home trade was not sufficient to keep our people employed. It was facts such as these that we ought to keep in view. They should remember the saying of the ancient Greek who remarked that the man who got the best iron would soon take all the gold from Crœsus.

Sir EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): The hon. Member who has just sat down said quite truly that he was not a bigoted free-trader. In that I am sure we all agree. He made an interesting speech because he gave us at first hand some definite information with regard to certain industrial facts. Now we want to get facts at first hand; they are always welcome to this House. But the hon. Member did not succeed, in my opinion, in drawing any very definite conclusion from those facts. It is the conclusion from the facts on which everything depends. He told us that certain steel industries were not doing well. I have no doubt it is so, but what is the reason why they are not doing well? Why, Sir, the reason was given really by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon. He pointed out that our capital has been greatly depleted by what we have spent on the war. It has been greatly depleted. Everybody knows it is exceedingly difficult to borrow money, and everybody connected with large businesses knows perfectly well that large businesses are holding their hands with regard to capital expenditure because of the difficulty of raising money. All that makes for contraction of trade.

Mr. RANDLES said his point was, not that the volume of trade was contracting, but that orders were being given to foreigners and we were losing orders.

Sir EDWARD GREY: I understood that the hon. Member's point was that there was contraction of trade here, and the United States were doing our trade. Any one listening to the hon. Member would have imagined that, in his opinion, there is no contraction of trade in the United States. In the last autumn the output of steel in the United States has been reduced by from 40 to 60 per cent.

Mr. RANDLES said that was the reason which he gave why the United States had come into our market—because there was depression in the United States.

Sir EDWARD GREY: I said they had reduced the output—they are not making so much. They have got a depression or reduction of trade at least as severe as ours at home. Protection has not saved them from that. And they are "dumping" their goods. Where are they "dumping" them? Into Canada, according to the hon. Member's own showing, a country with high protective duties. Therefore protective duties do not save them from "dumping," because, on his own showing, Canada has suffered (from his point of view) from the "dumping" of American goods. That is where I dispute the conclusions which the hon. Member has drawn. He will excuse me if I do not proceed to deal with the rest of his case, because I think most of it was included in the ground covered by the Secretary to the Board of Trade, who spoke yesterday, and to that I am coming presently. Now this debate is not only a long debate, but a very interesting one. There are so many points of view to be represented. There is, of course, the Opposition point of view, which on this occasion, no doubt, does include the general feeling of the Opposition to the Government. But it is more than that. It is not merely our common disagreement with the Government; it is our real and deep apprehension that there is on that side of the House a policy which is making for national disaster. But, besides our point of view, there are hon. Members on the other side of the House who want to avoid voting against the Government if they can, and hon. Members who want to vote with the Government, but find a difficulty in doing so. Then there are the protectionists, who will vote for the Government willingly, because at present they have nothing better to vote for, and there are, I suppose, some Members who will vote for the Government policy because they really approve of it. Well. Sir, of all these different points of view I think the Government policy is the least interesting, it is the least intelligible, and I venture to think, it is the least important.

But what is very important is the conduct of the Government. Not only this House, but the colleagues of the Government and the country, ever since this question was raised have suffered from the misunderstandings and confusion which have arisen. We know that last session there was a misunderstanding.

We were invited to a discussion in this House, and then were told that we could not have it except on a vote of censure. I need not dwell on the painful misunderstanding which came early in the autumn, to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon and the noble Lord the Member for Ealing have referred, which has left a painful impression in our public life. How have these misunderstandings come about? They have come about, in my opinion, from this—that the Government will treat this question of fiscal policy, not as a question of principle, not as a question of right or wrong, but as a question of tactics. We have not had, I am afraid, the last of the misunderstandings yet. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol is going to vote for the Government because he is satisfied with their policy. He approves of the course which they are steering. I am not surprised that he approves of the Government's course, but I am surprised at his confidence in thinking that course will be maintained. He remains on board the ship because for the moment the course which is being steered is one of which he approves. But the hon. Member for Darlington told him yesterday that five-sixths, in his opinion, of the Party opposite disapprove of that course, and intend to change it; and when it is changed they will throw the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol overboard. I trust that, if that happens, he will not be above accepting a helping hand even from an unexpected quarter. The course of the Government meets with his approval now, and they have undertaken a responsibility in regard to it. They are going to have his vote on what understanding? On the understanding, if there is anything in understandings at all, not merely that that is their course now, but that that is the course they mean to stand by for a reasonable time—they mean to stand by their announced policy, not for an hour or a day, but at least for the next election. What is that policy? Not the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Every one knows the statement of the President of the Board of Trade that if an appeal were made to the electors and a majority were returned in favour of the Government policy that would not entitle them to go further and carry out a policy of preference. From the point of view of exclusion—the negative side of the Government policy—the Government have been perfectly explicit, and if an election were to take place today and a Parliament elected which contained a majority supporting them the Government would be precluded during that Parliament from dealing with preference, and, I understand, from dealing with protection also. That is not, I am bound to warn the President of the Board of Trade, the opinion held by many of his supporters. The Prime Minister desires a change in public opinion which will render the adoption of preference possible. If, a few months or a year hence, the Government were to say that the change which they desired had taken place and preference were to be included in the policy before the country at the next election, every one will feel, after what has passed, that there had been a breach of faith, at any rate, with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol. I do not accuse the Government of any intention of not going through with their declared policy of fighting the next election on liberty to negotiate only, and excluding preference and protection. But it is beyond their power to keep the issue to that. They cannot make that the only issue; they cannot make it the chief issue before the country. Can they prevent the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham from being before the country, and can they separate him from his policy? Does not every one know that he announced his policy by saying that he was "in for a big fight?" Yes, Sir, it is a big fight, and, so far, the Government have declared no policy with regard to this fight except that of neutrality. Sir, it is the policy of Korea in the war between Russia and Japan, and it is worth about as much for the purposes of practical politics. The whole question is, not what the Government policy is, but, in this fight between the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham and those who disagree with him, which side do the Government mean to take? The right hon. Gentleman is going to fight the next election on his policy. On which side is the Government going to fight? Are they going to fight for him or against him? Are they going to wait to see whether he wins before they fight at all? The President of the Board of Trade reproached us on this side of the House with being fiscal policy Quakers. Fiscally, he made a fighting speech. But did it not occur to him that his most dangerous foes are those of his own household? Did it not occur to him that the fight is raging now, and the question which the country is asking is—On which side is victory to be? Are they going to stand aside at the critical moment and take no part in the fight? No, they are taking a part in the fight—some of them. The President of the Local Government Board has taken part in the fight. He wishes to rob his own Government of one of the supporters of their policy in order to add to the supporters of the Birmingham policy, which is not that of the Government.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): No.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Surely he has opposed a supporter of the Government policy as declared by the President of the Board of Trade. He has opposed the hon. Baronet the Member for Wiltshire in the interests, not of this side of the House, but in the interests of a supporter of the Birmingham policy. He is so generous that he wishes to rob his own Government of a supporter of their policy in order to add one to the supporters of a policy which is not theirs. Surely, if the Government are to play a part which is worthy of any Government, they must discontinue giving their support to candidates who support a policy which is not theirs, or else, after the next election, they may be in this position—they may find that the policy which is now excluded from their own has obtained a majority in the next Parliament, and they will have to say, "Yes, we are very sorry; it was not our policy, but all the candidates whom we supported were in favour of that policy and we must now give way to circumstances which we could not help." That will not be an honourable or worthy position. But if the Government are to re-establish themselves, one thing more they must do. They must stop the flow of individual opinion, and give us more of the collective opinion of the Government. We seem to be getting nothing but individual opinions; but we have a right to have the opinion of the Government and not a mere collection of the opinions of individuals. Even the President of the Board of Trade, though he did speak largely for the Government, spoke also largely an individual opinion, and he has been followed by the Secretary to the Board of Trade, who, having begun by saying that the Government had placed a policy before the country, then devoted an exhaustive speech to defending the policy which was not that of the Government, but the policy of protection.

To protection I will come presently. First let me have a word on the policy of liberty of negotiation, which I observe includes retaliation. Their policy is that liberty of negotiation must be backed by retaliation, or else it is not worth anything. On that they say they must have an election before they can have liberty of negotiation. I do not think that is a proper way of dealing with the question at all. I will not labour the point because the right hon. Gentleman has already raised it. Do they consider the Sugar Convention Bill an example of the policy of retaliation or not? It is often quoted as an example on their side. If it is there is no need to go to the country before presenting us with another example. If it is not an example let them cease to quote it. I do not object in the least to talk about liberty of negotiation and retaliation. I believe with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose, who laid down three conditions. I once laid down five conditions myself, but three of them are the same, and I abide by his conditions, I do not object to what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol said with regard to retaliation. He says he has no objection to it in principle, nor have I. He says he can imagine many instances in which it would be unprofitable or worse for this country, and so can I. He also says he can imagine many instances in which it would be useful to this country, but there I differ with him, and until he states those instances I can only be content with saying that I have less imagination than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, but I think I may say I have an open mind on the subject. We have got no question before us of retaliation at this moment, and with all respect to the Secretary to the Board of Trade, I say he did not provide a very convincing instance that retaliation has succeeded. We want facts to go on. In history, where it has been tried, other countries have raised their duties against each other; they have marched up the hill and found it unpleasant, and then they have marched down, and after much suffering, after the operation of the war was over, found that trade was improved. Give me an instance in which the eventual gain has been greater than the loss incurred by the contesting countries. I have not got that instance yet. These protectionist countries, with their weapons loaded, had no more effect on the Dingley and McKinley tariffs than free trade. Germany was as helpless with the McKinley tariff as we were. In the year after the McKinley tariff was imposed the German exports increased by 34 per cent., and British exports by 60 per cent. We were helpless before them, we both suffered from the blow, but Great Britain recovered with more elasticity and vigour than the protectionist countries. Surely on the Government policy we have nothing to discuss. If you go to the country there is nothing to discuss, because you cannot discuss retaliation without a case before you. You could not go to the country on liberty to go to war without saying whom you are to go to war with. If you go to the country on a policy of liberty to go to war I should say that I agree entirely with the policy that the Government should have liberty to go to war, on one condition, and that is that they would get the authority of Parliament first. If you go to the country on liberty to negotiate, or retaliation, you have nothing to discuss, and all I contend for is that you shall not retaliate without coming to Parliament first for authority. If that really be the policy of the Government as the President of the Board of Trade describes this abstract liberty to negotiate and retaliate—if that really be their policy—then I say that the President of the Board of Trade is infinitely nearer to us on this side of the House than he is to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. If his policy is only that abstract liberty to negotiate and retaliate, and if it excludes the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, then he is much nearer to us than the Birmingham policy. He said that he differs not at all from the objects of the Birmingham policy, but with the methods. We can all say that too. What are the alleged objects? More goodwill and closer union with the Colonies. More prosperity for British trade. Those are the objects of all of us. It is not a difference about objects, but it is the methods which form the whole difficulty. The objects we all agree with, but the methods we dread because they will not secure the objects, in fact they would be disastrous to those objects. The Commission which is now sitting is not engaged in drawing up a tariff for hypothetical retaliation, but it is drawing up a permanent tariff, and one which is intended to be permanent. When the Secretary for the Board of Trade was speaking, the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich asked him, in the course of his speech, whether the Government intended it to be a permanent tariff, and the hon. Member replied quite simply and frankly that, as an Under-Secretary, he could not go further into the policy of the Government. Everybody who has been an Under-Secretary will accept that answer as adequate. Everybody who has been a member of a Government knows the high value which is placed upon the reticence of Under-Secretaries, but the question did not disturb the Secretary to the Board of Trade in the least. He quite rightly said he could not answer, but I do not think he minded the question. He wants a permanent tax, and if he does not get it from the present Government he is looking forward to get it from someone else, and this unofficial Commission is engaged in drawing up a tariff. I can imagine what the proceedings at that Commission will be, what wrestling and wrangling and log-rolling there wil be before they agree. And if their tariff comes to be placed before this House for acceptance, the scenes of that Commission will become the scenes of this House, and we shall settle a tariff which will be called a scientific tariff, but which will be settled not by science, but by political log-rolling.

Let me now come to the speech of the Secretary to the Board of Trade. I entirely admit the ability of that speech, and he always excites my admiration, but he always fills me with distrust—I do not mean of his personal character, but of the soundness of his arguments. He seems to me to be a master in stating something which appears to be an answer, but which is not really an answer to what has come from this side of the House. He said we attached too much importance to the cheapness of goods. He said trade is better when prices are high, and bad when prices are low. That sounds very well, but it is entirely irrelevant to our point. Trade is good when prices are rising only when the rise comes from the expansion of the natural demand for goods. Protection might raise prices, and yet it would not make good trade, and why? Because the rise in price is to come not from the expansion of a natural demand, but from restricting the supply. Supposing by some unimaginable catastrophe, the output of iron and steel was reduced by one half and could not be expanded, you would have a rise in prices but very bad trade. The Secretary to the Board of Trade dealt with the question of the excess of exports over imports, and he quoted the United States as a prosperous country. How does he account for that great excess of exports over imports? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon answered that point, and answered it completely. May I ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he wishes to see our exports exceed our imports? If he does, there is one way in which it can be brought about. Let us embark in another great war. Let us have to borrow some hundreds of millions until we are unable to raise it in this country, and have to raise it abroad, and then our exports will exceed our imports because they will have to go to pay our debts, and no one on the other side will stand up and say that our trade is good then. Free imports are in our opinion one of the essential conditions to our present prosperity. I am reluctant to trouble the House with quotations, and I will not give one from Cobden, but I must return to what the expectations of those who introduced free trade were, and how they have been realised, and I would commend this extract to the Secretary of the Board of Trade, who has been studying the history of that time. Here is what Sir Robert Peel said in carrying free trade. Did he look forward to our remaining the sole manufacturing country in the world, and other countries supplying us with raw materials? On the contrary, he looked forward to more severe competition, after the time of free trade, in manufactured goods with foreign countries than we had ever known before. He says—

> "The continuance of permanent peace will expose us to more extensive and more formidable competition with foreign nations with respect to manufactures. During war we commanded the supply of nations. Peace has introduced not only new consumers but also formidable manufacturing interests. In order that we may retain our pre-eminence, it is of the greatest importance that we neglect no opportunity of securing to ourselves those advantages by which that pre-eminence can alone be secured. Sir, I firmly believe that abundance and cheapness of provisions is one of the constituents by which the continuance of manufacturing and commercial pre-eminence can be maintained."

Conditions have changed since that time. That is true, but in my opinion they have changed in the sense of making those words even more true and more necessary to us than they were at the time they were spoken. We build more ships in a year than all the rest of the world put together, an extraordinary fact for an island of this size with a population of this size, more ships not merely than the greatest country in the world in size and population, not merely than a group of countries, but than all the world put together. I am astonished at the fact. Some hon. Members who support the Birmingham policy appear also to be astonished at the fact for another reason. They seem to be astonished that any other countries build any ships at all. I am astonished at the amount we do. Does anybody really believe that free imports have had nothing to do with that extraordinary success? Some of the hopes of the original free-traders have not been realised, yet by far the greater part of them have been, and some results which they never hoped for and could hardly have imagined at that time have been realised.

Now how would protection work? Is it going to give more employment and higher wages? Take the instance given by my right hon. friend the Member for Wolverhampton. He gave the instance of steel imported from the United States—dumped I suppose—which is used in this country to make steel tubes which are again exported to the United States. What is the protectionist theory? That the United States steel ought never to have come here at all, that it displaced so much employment in this country. Very well, keep it out, put the price up to a price which will satisfy Mr. Brailsford or some other great expert in the matter, some one whose works, for whatever reason, are not doing as well as he expects. Keep out the American steel. How do you know that the steel tubes would be made at all, and if they were not made at all there would be no demand for the corresponding steel in this country, and by keeping it out, so far from giving extra employment, you would have destroyed the employment of the steel tube trade, and you would not get extra employment in the steel trade because you would have diminished the demand for it at home. So also in the case of ships. Keep out your dumped steel plates. Well, they will go to other countries. Protection will not keep them out of other countries, because the hon. Member for Cockermouth, who has just sat down, complained that dumped American goods go into Canada. They will go to other countries and our shipbuilding trade will not maintain its pre-eminence, because we shall have given up that exceptional advantage which distinguishes us from other enterprising nations who might build ships in competition with us. Yes, that is where I think hon. Members fail to see the point when they say that producers and consumers ought to be classed together. They say we are wrong in drawing a distinction between producers and consumers. Well, in a sense they must be classed together. Their interests are the same. The producers in the shipbuilding trade are the consumers in the steel trade, and the interests of consumers and producers both together make for the policy of free imports. It has not been proved that protectionist countries without free imports can really manufacture more cheaply than we can do. The Secretary to the Board of Trade gave a case which will be within the recollection of the House, of how by being secure of the home market, as well as having the field in the open market, you can produce more cheaply by extending your works. That was a hypothetical case. It is not proved that it is really the fact that they produce more cheaply. If you can give one trade that advantage and one trade alone, if you can guarantee to one trade the home market, and say: "You shall have free imports of all you require and be secure in the possession of the home market." I think that would be true. But then you cannot do that for one trade alone, and what we contend is that under protection the loss by having to pay more for your half-manufactured raw material, and the loss incurred through rings and trusts, more than takes away the advantage which the producer acquires from having his home market guaranteed to him. Does the Secretary to the Board of Trade really believe that the protectionist country has the free-trade country at its mercy? If he does he must wish that we should not only become protectionist, but that the United States should become free trade. It used to be a commonplace on both sides that if the United States became free trade our manufacturers would be more hardly run in the competition of the world. That is what follows from the argument of the Secretary to the Board of Trade. We have had many statements, some of them perfectly true, that all is not well with our trade, but we do not get it proved that protection would be any remedy. That is where the protectionist case falls through. We have had the Secretary to the Board of Trade and the hon. Member for Cockermouth giving instances of trades that are not doing well. Yes, Sir, but I think the evils are exaggerated. Undoubtedly you can find industries which are not doing well, and industries which are falling off. But it is not proved that protection is a remedy. A ruined industry is not in itself evidence that the country is doing badly. You may go to any great city and be told that there used to be a trade there which does not now exist; but you will find that the city has grown and that it is richer and more populous than it was. And what do you find? Why over and over again you will find that trades have disappeared—poor trades paying low wages and making small profits—and that they have been killed, not by foreign competition, but by the rise of other and more profitable trades paying higher wages.

I turn to the question of colonial preference. I spoke of misunderstandings. Misunderstandings between members of the Government are nothing in mischief compared with misunderstandings between ourselves and the Colonies. This policy is to bind the Empire together. Without it we are told that the Empire will fall to pieces. We treat the Colonies well to-day and they recognise it freely. They recognise the advantage of the Imperial connection. Our Fleet, our whole resources, are at their disposal. A small matter in which a small colony is interested is a matter which the whole of our resources may be used to support. Our diplomatic and Consular services are at their disposal, our whole machinery of Government is theirs, and we press them for nothing in return, and rightly so. What they give us we take gladly, but we do not press them and they treat us well. Everybody knows in this country that we recognise freely and gladly what the Colonies have done for us, and if this goodwill were crowned by free trade within the Empire, no doubt it would be a grand thing. But that is not a bargain. That is throwing down all barriers once and for all, and unfortunately that is not in question at the present time. It is not before this country, it is not before any colony, it is not in contemplation in the Birmingham policy. The Colonies think they are being asked in return for the Birmingham policy for what? Not for free trade within the Empire, but simply that they should raise their duties against the foreigner. I am much more interested in the duties which the Colonies impose on British goods then in the duties they impose on foreign goods. I would much rather not ask them, "Will you raise your duties against foreigners?" but "Will you lower your duties on British goods?" They have told us quite plainly that they cannot do so. The Canadian Finance Minister has told us that Canada cannot further lower her duties on British goods. Mr. Deakin has told us the same for Australia, and that free trade within the Empire was impracticable. Mr. Deakin has gone further and has explained that preference may mean on the part of the Colonies not a lowering of duties but a raising of duties. He said that before giving a preference to the mother country the South African Federation raised their duties 25 per cent., and that if Australia could take the same step it would not be condemned. Sir, that is a dangerous misunderstanding. The Secretary for the Colonies has been quoting Carlyle and Ruskin lately. There was nothing Carlyle denounced more than the danger of a cash *nexus*. It is a cash *nexus* we have been asked to establish between ourselves and our Colonies. We are not drawing them towards free trade by the Birmingham policy, but they are drawing us towards protection. It is an essential condition in their minds that they should be left free under preference to protect their own manufacturers against British competition, and then give us much more protection against the foreigner, if you please. But that is not what this country thinks is before it. The country has been led to suppose that, under the Birmingham policy, the Colonies will lower their duties and admit British goods on lower terms. There is where the danger of the misunderstanding comes in, and there is where the Colonies and we are being deceived, and the reaction after great expectations will do more harm to the Imperial connection than people conceive possible. What we want to do is to be perfectly plain to the Colonies in this matter, to admit that if they choose to be protective they are free to remain protective. But get this question back on to sober, sensible lines and let them rely on the goodwill and sympathy with which we regard their progress and prosperity—goodwill and sympathy are weak words—the joy and pride with which we regard their progress and prosperity. We see nations jealous [of each other, thinking that the prosperity of one is a damage to another We see in the British Empire a number of separate independent units, for that is what they are, looking on the prosperity of each, independent though it be, with joy and pride, and that is the unique thing in the British Empire. I dread the effect which may have been brought about already from the disappointment which will come when the Colonies thoroughly understand that the idea in the minds of people over here is that we are to press them towards free trade before they are ready to take a step in that direction.

I agree with my right hon. friend the Member for Forest of Dean that we must not make too much of the prosperity argument. Our first business is to defeat this disastrous policy. Do not let that blind us to what remains to be done. Depend upon it that if you embark on this policy of tariffs the scramble which will take place will drive out the discussion of these social problems. All we contend for is that in the last two generations we have made progress, more slowly than people would like, but still progress, and we see the possibility of progress, and we are convinced that the conditions of life will become better. The distribution of wealth will become more evenly distributed provided we do not interfere with the prosperity of the country. But to maintain the prosperity of the country is the essential condition of progress; and it is because we believe that this policy will damage the prosperity of the country, and will not only demoralise our politics and depress our trade, but postpone indefinitely any question of social reform, that I shall support the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. WALTER LONG: I very much regret that before I offer to the House the few remarks I desire to make on the Amendment under consideration, I have to deal with a personal matter which has been referred to by so many speakers in the debate, and especially by the right hon. Baronet whose eloquent speech has just been delivered. I am accused of having gone down to the country to support a candidate who is a supporter of what is known as the tariff reform policy, and to oppose a Gentleman who is a supporter of the Leader of the Government. I have been attacked, not only by the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition, and others, but by my noble friend the Member for Greenwich, who has put his case into the clearest and most forcible terms; and I do feel that my noble friend ought to have hesitated before he made so grave a charge against me of using my position as a Minister and departing from the best traditions of public life, and ought to have ascertained that he was accurate in his facts. My noble friend laid down the conditions for himself, and I take them as he laid them down. In his speech last night the hon. Member for Greenwich said—

> "There was an instance of something stronger than paradox. That a Minister should go down and oppose a Conservative Member for the sake of a policy which his Leader had not adopted, and which his colleagues had now repudiated—should oppose one who had been a supporter of him so long as he was loyal to the faith of the Party; that, indeed, was a violation of all the traditions of Party Government and of the best traditions of public life."

Well, if I had acted as the right hon. Baronet stated, or as my noble friend, suggests, I confess I would have been surprised myself; and I am bound to trouble the House with a reference to the actual facts which occurred. The dissatisfaction expressed by the constituency of my hon. friend the Member for the Chippenham Division of Wiltshire, for his action in Parliament, had been manifested in many ways, and, as he knows, for a considerable time before the fiscal policy was ever introduced.

SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER: I am sorry to interrupt my right hon. friend, but I cannot accept his statement. Discontent with my action and attitude has never been expressed from any public point of view, but only by the official organ of the Conservative Party.

MR. WALTER LONG: I did not intend to convey the suggestion that there had been an official meeting of the Party, and I wish to disclaim the smallest desire to do any injustice to my hon. friend. He and I are much too old personal friends for that. But I will say that my hon.

friend, in addressing his constituents with a courage and candour which, in my judgment, did him infinite credit, and which I should have expected of him, did not limit himself to fiscal reform, but stated that he condemned the policy of the Government in regard to education and also in regard to the administration of the Army and military matters. My hon. friend further, in a very remarkable sentence, admitted that he had been a first-class misdemeanant, and said that he did not propose to trouble his constituents with the long list of his offences under the head of local government and other similar questions. It was upon that statement that action was taken by my hon. friend's constituents, who started the candidature of a gentleman, not as a supporter of fiscal reform, but as a supporter of His Majesty's Government.

Sir J. DICKSON-POYNDER: I do not want to unnecessarily interrupt my right hon. friend, but I cannot accept the account he has given. I hope that I may be permitted an opportunity later on of replying to the right hon. Gentleman. [Cries of "Go on."] Well, if I may be permitted, I will give the House my version of the case. At the meeting to which the right hon. Gentleman referred, I told the Association that I had taken certain action in this House last year with regard to the Army scheme of the Government, and in that action many Members on my own side associated themselves much more prominently and ably than I did; but the best vindication of my action was the fact that in the autumn shuffle of the Government three Ministers who were responsible for that scheme were left out and three others put in their place. Since there has been an alteration in the Army scheme I have not had the desire, or the inclination, to say one single word against the Army administration of the Government. With regard to education, when the Bill was before the House I did not vote for any Amendment against it, nor did I actively oppose it at any of its stages; but I pointed out that I thought the provisions dealing with the voluntary schools were not tenable under the altered conditions, and could not last; that they were not practicable, and would shortly have to be altered. There are many Members, I believe, on this side of the House who hold a similar opinion.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I do not quite understand why my hon. friend interrupted me, because he has only confirmed the original statement I made. He expressed with courage and clearness to the meeting of the Conservative Association his objections to the Government policy on two very substantial questions, education and Army reform, and said that on these questions he proposed to adopt the Radical view. It was because of my hon. friend's views on general questions, outside fiscal reform, that the local association decided that he no longer represented their views. So anxious, however, was the chairman of the Association to find a bridge for my hon. friend that he corresponded with him, and endeavoured to get him to declare that he would be a supporter of the Unionist Party at the next election on their general policy. I hope that my hon. friend does not dispute that?

Sir J. DICKSON-POYNDER: When I know what the policy is.

Mr. WALTER LONG: If my hon. friend had declared his intention of standing as a Unionist or Conservative supporter of the Government he would have had the widest field. If his opposition had been confined to fiscal reform, nothing would have induced me to oppose him. Further, I venture to say that if the hon. Gentleman had made such a declaration as that suggested to him, or such a declaration as had been made by my noble friend the Member for Greenwich last night, there would have been no opposition to him by any members of the Party, and certainly not by the Government. So far as I am personally concerned, I am entitled to say that I am a resident in the county represented by my hon. friend, an elector in his division, and a member of the Association, and that I acted in what I believed to be the right way, and in conformity with what I believed to be custom and practice. I do not think I deserve the charge which was brought against me by my noble friend the Member for Greenwich.

I pass from that explanation, which I was bound to make, of my own conduct and action, to the Amendment which is under discussion. I am bound to say, having been an attentive listener to this debate, that I heard the speech of the right hon. Baronet who has just spoken with peculiar satisfaction. The right hon. Baronet always makes eloquent and powerful contributions to our debates, and generally makes a practical suggestion at the end of them. In the debate to which we have been listening there has been a singular want of practical suggestion on the part of those who have been criticising His Majesty's Government. The Government, they say, have no policy of their own. They then endeavour to show that the declarations of the Prime Minister at Sheffield and Manchester have been altered by something which has taken place since, or by speeches in this House, and they then turn to a general attack upon and condemnation of that which is not the policy of the Government but which is the scheme of the ex-Colonial Secretary. I have been attacked in the course of these debates more or less severely because of certain statements I have made during the recess in my constituency and elsewhere; and it has been said that I ought not to have remained a member of the Government if I were prepared to make such statements. I confess I am astonished at any comment of that kind having been passed. Believing, as I do, that this scheme of drawing closer together the Colonies and the mother country, of which there are many advocates on that side of the House as on this, is one which I think to be worth considerable sacrifices to carry out, if it could be worked out properly, and if the Colonies were able to make satisfactory replies to our proposals—I am not dealing now with the question of proposals but with the future of the scheme as a whole—and, holding that view, I think it would not be candid, or that I should not be playing a proper part, if I had not told my constituents and others who did me the honour to listen to me what my views were. Surely the question whether I should remain in the Government or not is not a question that those outside the Government, who can know but little of what passes between colleagues—and I say that deliberately because we heard a great deal to-day at second and third hand—I am not of course referring to my right hon. friend the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer—I am referring to suggestions made as to conversations between Ministers—surely the question whether it was right or not that I should remain a member of the Cabinet was a question for the Prime Minister and myself. I need hardly say to the House of Commons in which I have had the honour of sitting for a great many years and which is as good a judge of personal character as any Assembly or gathering of men in the world, that, however low the House of Commons may rank my powers to discharge the duties which have fallen upon me since I have been here, I am confident they will not charge me with action unworthy of an English gentleman such as I should have been guilty of had I remained in the Government, no longer being in agreement with my colleagues.

I pass from that to the Amendment. After all, it is good Party fighting to bring charges against Ministers of making conflicting statements, and it is perfectly legitimate that right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen opposite should do their best to weaken our position if, in anything we have said we have not acted as we ought to have acted. I must, however, repeat what has been said more than once, namely, that I am more and more astonished as the debate has progressed at the determination of right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen opposite to carry it on in the absence of the Prime Minister. Surely that conviction must have been forced on right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen themselves. Almost every speaker has gone into matters, has made demands, and has pressed questions which every man who has been in a Cabinet knows can only with propriety be answered by the head of the Government himself. In the absence of the Prime Minister the debate has lost nearly all its interest and value. I feel, however, from my own point of view that, great though the loss has been which has been sustained by the absence of the Prime Minister, there is one very good reason to rejoice that the debate has taken place, and that is because it has given an occasion for the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol. If there had been no other contribution to the debate than that speech I should say that the occasion had been well utilised, because my right hon. friend not only summed up the case in a manner which I am sure commanded the respect and admiration of the House of Commons, but, further, he indicated that in regard to the policy of the Government—the policy of retaliation—not only was he prepared to approve of it in certain cases but he urged its prompt adoption. We heard the speech in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose introduced his Amendment and other speeches like that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton. In both those speeches, and in many other speeches, we have heard condemnation of the Government and criticism of every proposal we have made having for its object the arrest of bad trade and the improvement of the industrial condition of the country. In the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol we have had, however, a practical suggestion, and, therefore, if we have gained nothing else from this debate we have had that advantage. We are told that the policy of the Government is an unreal policy. We are told by my noble friend the Member for Ealing that if we only mean retaliation why have all this bother and upset in the country, and that we could do it without. My right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer in his speech to-day made a statement of what took place in the Cabinet on the occasion which immediately preceded his resignation and other resignations. With reference to that statement I would only say this, I was present on those occasions and I am bound honestly to say that my memory does not exactly tally with my hon. friend's, but here I feel, and I am quite sure my right hon. friend will agree with me, that it would not be proper that anyone but the Prime Minister should deal with my right hon. friend's version of what happened. I for one regret the necessity which led my right hon. friend to leave the Cabinet, and we all listened to his statement to-day with a full realisation that we had lost valuable services. I myself lost my right hon. friend as a colleague with very great regret because he was an old guide and leader to me in my early days in the House of Commons. It is, however, impossible for me or for any other member of the Cabinet, except the Prime Minister, who alone is responsible, to deal with the question of what happened in the Cabinet. Indeed I thought it unnecessary on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton to give us, as he did. a description of what passed in the time of Sir Robert Peel in order to emphasise what he said the policy of a strong Prime Minister would be. If the right hon. Gentleman wants to attack the Prime Minister let him wait until the Prime Minister comes back, when the Prime Minister will be able to answer him, and I shall be very much surprised if the Prime Minister does not satisfy the House of Commons that the course he followed was perfectly right and proper.

It is said we have no policy at all, that the policy of retaliation is not a real one, and could be adopted without coming to the House of Commons or without the authority of a general election. I am not quite sure how it is suggested that we should proceed except by the plan we have adumbrated. Is it suggested that it should be done by Order in Council? If so, that is the very policy which right hon. Gentlemen opposite have condemned. They have demanded to know from us whether in the application of these principles the power of Parliament would be removed and they have been told that that would not be the case. They then suggest that we want no new authority and that we can do all that is necessary as regards retaliation against other countries without coming to Parliament or going to the country. I venture to say there is very little justification for that view. Technically it may be accurate that we could put in force this policy without the authority of Parliament or that of the country having been obtained at a general election. But I venture to say that if this is to be an effective weapon, if it is to be one that can be used usefully—and I believe its greatest usefulness will be found in the power of using it rather than in actually using it—it can only be so when it is known that the Government of this country have been authorised by the Parliament and people of this country to use retaliatory powers, when necessary, in order to prevent injustice being done to our own industries. Then I believe the effect of that knowledge would be almost as powerful as would be the actual imposition of retaliation. But that would be impossible unless the Government are clothed with the power and authority of Parliament and the country. That disposes of the argument that we have the power now. What is the other argument? That retaliation is useless. A great deal of the argument of this debate, and a great many of the opinions advanced and the figures quoted, must be taken after all as figurative of the opinions of different Parties holding distinctly different views, who have put forward from their side of the House what they think will justify their opposition to the policy of retaliation. Hon. Gentlemen opposite advance their own statistics in order to support their own view, but a great deal must depend on the expectations realised in the future. We, at all events, believe that retaliation is an effective weapon. The hon. Member for Glasgow, who made yesterday what I venture to say was an extremely able and interesting speech, however opinions may differ in regard to its arguments, settled that case in an extremely able manner. We believe that the statistics he advanced are correct and because we believe that the conclusions which he anticipated will be arrived at, so we think the policy of His Majesty's Government will be accepted by Parliament as a practical and sensible policy.

My hon. friend said dumping was one of the things we really had to deal with. The right hon. Member for Wolverhampton said you will never stop the dumping; whatever you may do, it will go on, whatever your policy may be, whatever your powers of retaliation may be. No doubt it is perfectly true that all dumping will not be stopped, but we believe that a great deal of that dumping which has been most injurious and destructive to the industry of this country would be stopped if we have the power we ask Parliament to give us. Another argument advanced is that this dumping on the whole is rather a good thing, that we are not justified in putting an end to it. But that is not the view of the majority of practical business men so far as I have been able to ascertain, and I have endeavoured to make myself familiar with the opinion of representative men of business throughout the country, and, almost without exception, the case they put is that in many instances capital could be employed in greater amount and with greater advantage, and that greater employment could be given to the working man here if there was such interference with the practice of dumping as they believe could be effected if we had the powers of retaliation. That is the opinion of business men in this country. What was the opinion of business men in others? I find in the Industrial Commission held in America in 1900–1901 Mr. Charles Schwab, the president of the Steel Commission, described how dumping in his country, under the wall of high tariffs, enabled them to derive great advantage, and kept their manufacturers fully employed; that is to say, while in their own country they were able to sell their produce at a profit, they were also able to make a profit on goods dumped down in this country, and sold under cost. [AN HON. MEMBER: How about the Steel Trust?] I do not think that is any argument at all, because, if Mr. Schwab's evidence is trustworthy, the more steel made the more would be dumped here. All these arguments point to one conclusion, and, as my hon. friend said yesterday, all practical business men make the same demand, and surely it is worth while to try by some such means as those we have suggested to prevent this state of things, which lessens the demand for labour in this country. The right hon. Gentleman who moved this Amendment said he did not dispute that there was some case made out for the consideration of a remedy for this serious state of things. Now we have been told the policy we suggest is no use, and that the policy of the late Colonial Secretary is one that would bring ruin and destruction on this country; but no other policy has been suggested although these evils admittedly exist. It may be urged by some that everything is so prosperous that it is not necessary to make any alteration, but they are only a small minority. The great majority of those who have discussed this question admit that there are evils to be removed and cured. At all events the policy of the Government is a real policy of action, while Gentlemen on the other side of the House rest themselves purely on criticism, and make no proposals of their own.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham) said that the House would not be disposed to criticise very harshly the action of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to the hon. Member for the Chippenham Division, as that action had now been explained. But surely it was not usual for Cabinet Ministers to concern themselves very much with the driving out of recalcitrant or unorthodox members from their own Party. The right hon. Gentleman said that he went down to Wiltshire in his private capacity.

MR. WALTER LONG: No.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: It was part of the complaint against the Government that no one could ever tell whether a Minister was speaking in his private or in his official capacity. No one had been less strict than the right hon. Gentleman in confining himself to the official policy of the Government; and though he had just made a speech to which no one could take exception, in the country the right hon. Gentleman had put forth very different doctrines and employed a very different tone. It was unfortunate, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman should be the first to make an attack on one who for so many years had given him consistent support. The speech of the President of the Board of Trade seemed to take no account of the realities of the present situation, and to be remote from the real condition by which it was surrounded. The right hon. Gentleman had suggested that the 10 per cent. duty proposed by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham was for revenue purposes only. Did the right hon. Gentleman believe that the ugly rush to join the Tariff Commission proceeded from any exalted enthusiasm for revenue; that those wealthy manufacturers sitting in conclave day after day, and defraying their own expenses, were there for the sole purpose of discovering a new source of revenue to balance the Budget of Imperial preference? The President of the Board of Trade had complained that the Government were abused and attacked as if they were a protectionist Government wishing to carry out a protectionist policy, and suggested that that was an unwarranted assumption, if not an invention. He would state the successive incidents which had led them to that possibly mistaken conclusion. First, the late Colonial Secretary, while a member of the Government, was permitted to make pretectionist speeches, to send protectionist letters, and to flood the country with protectionist literature. What would have been said of Sir Robert Peel if he had set up a private printing press at Tamworth? The Prime Minister had been careful in his speeches to use language which neither excluded nor discountenanced the policy advocated by the then Colonial Secretary; the Party Press had been practically unanimous in preaching protection. If the right hon. Gentleman read *The Times* he would have seen that very odd free-trade notions were being expressed in the newspapers which most regularly supported the Government. At by-elections protectionist candidates had stood on the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham with the full support and countenance of His Majesty's Ministers. Then there were the measures, more or less severe, which had been taken against those members of the Unionist Party who had been actively engaged in combating protection. Perhaps hon. Members were aware that he himself had to rely upon the daily Press for information as to the course of business in this House. Then there was the ejection from the Cabinet of the free-trade Ministers, whose places were taken in every case by representatives of the most extreme protectionist opinion in Parliament, and lastly, there was the appointment of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the face of these facts could it be said that they were unreasonable in imagining that there was in the country a real protectionist movement, that they were confronted with a real movement for the establishment of a general and permanent tariff, that the Government sympathised with that movement, and were prepared to aid, abet, and, if possible, profit by it? His right hon. friend had made a remarkable speech which had not received from the Party Press the attention one might have expected from the nature of the declarations it contained. He had declared that he and the Government were opposed to the principle and theory of protection; he had declared against food taxes, even after the next election; he had declared against an average 10 per cent. *ad valorem* duty on foreign manufactured goods; and he had stated that there was to be no retaliation without the consent of Parliament in each special and particular case. It was true the right hon. Gentleman used a lot of vague language of uncertain import to soothe the feelings of his protectionist supporters, who might not unreasonably have been disquieted by those declarations. Personally he would be quite content with the language and declarations of the President of the Board of Trade if he thought the right hon. Gentleman had power to give effect to them. If they had been made six months earlier he thought there would have been no great protectionist movement in the country, no Free Food League, no Tariff Reform Committee, no speech by the President of the Local Government Board against the hon. Member for the Chippenham Division of Wiltshire, and perhaps no resignations, or only one resignation, from the Cabinet in the autumn. But there was such a thing as making declarations too late. Not only had they been confronted with the official acts of hostility to the cause of free-trade, which he had enumerated, but free-trade Members of the Unionist Party had been threatened by the Tariff Reform League. Mr. Ratcliffe Cousins in his letter stated—

> "This League has by resolution determined to oppose the return of free-fooders, whether Unionist or Radical, and we shall use the whole of our organisation for this object.'

And a prominent member of the League, who had declared himself, heart and soul, with its objects, was now Civil Lord of the Admiralty! In face of the danger with which they conceived themselves to be confronted, the free-trade Unionists had been compelled to take steps more or less serious, and in some cases, irrevocable. They had had the unpleasant business of differing with old friends and fighting their organisations, and in some cases new organisations had had to be formed with a view to possible eventualities. The President of the Board of Trade had stated that the Government were prepared to fight for free trade. Where would free trade have been now if it had been left to the champions on the Treasury Bench? If there was in England and Scotland a strong growing and embattled opinion, ready to fight against any attempt to revert to protection, it was due to the exertions of the Liberal leaders, the exertions and sacrifices of private people who did not usually take much part in politics, and, let it never be forgotten, the sacrifices of the free-trade Ministers on the Government side of the House. These events had produced a profound impression upon the public mind, and a sensible alteration in the existing balance of Parties in the country. It would take more than one hesitating speech to remove the impression these events had caused or to avert the consequences to which they might lead.

The President of the Board of Trade had divided his speech into two parts, in one of which he spoke for himself, and in the other for the Government. So far as he spoke for himself, he (the speaker) accepted his statements unreservedly, and, as a free-trader, was grateful for his emphatic though tardy declaration of faith; but in view of what occurred since the beginning of this dispute, he could not put the same confidence in the statements which he made on behalf of the Government. While the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary to the Board of Trade, and the President of the Local Government Board remained on the Treasury Bench, he could not believe that the assurances which had been given were founded on the conscientious convictions of a united Cabinet. They seemed much more likely to be a tactical expedient suggested by the results of recent by-elections and rendered desirable by the approaching division. How could it be known that after further by-elections another Government attitude would not be taken? It could not be forgotten that the Prime Minister, when he succeeded Lord Salisbury, stated at the Carlton Club that the policy of the Conservative Party should not be altered, but within a year he declared at Sheffield that he proposed to make a fundamental alteration of the fiscal policy of the last two generations. There was not much danger of the Unionist free-traders deserting the cause of free trade. If only the issue were put plainly enough, he believed there were 100 Conservative Members who would rather go out of public life than support a definite fully-developed plan of protection. But there was a danger that in the existing uncertainty they might be induced by the difficulties of the situation, or by considerations of Party or friendship, or in the hope of conciliating doubtful friends, or of mollifying adroit antagonists, to fritter away or damage some part of the great substructure upon which the commercial system of the country depended. As his noble friend had stated, it did not rest with the Government to decide what should be the issue at the next election. It rested with them to say what should not be done before the next election, but what would be done at the election; and still more what would be done after that election they could not with certainty declare. The issue at the next election had already been fixed, as the issue of elections were often fixed, by the force of character of a powerful politician who occupied a private station apart from the political organisation of either of the Parties. The issue had been fixed, and that issue was whether this country should make the same kind of reversal of fiscal policy that Germany was persuaded to make in the 80's by Prince Bismarck.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: Hear, hear!

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Now the House had that on the highest possible authority. We were confronted with an urgent and vital issue. Ministers on the Front Bench deluded themselves. Nobody cared what might happen to any particular set of Ministers, and after the election no one would care a row of buttons what their particular opinions might have been. All these balancings, limitations, and half-pledges, these little devices by which an embarrassed Government staved off ruin from day to day would, after the next election, be swept as smooth as the sands of the shore after a flood tide. After the election, if the Member for Birmingham was in possession of a Parliamentary majority, he would dictate what the policy of the country would be. He had left the present Government because it would not accept his policy; after obtaining a mandate, was he likely to take less than he was prepared to take before? If the President of the Board of Trade, wishing, no doubt, to carry out the pledges he had given on which Unionist free-taders had recorded votes for the Government, turned up in *Hansard* the speech he delivered on Monday night, did he think that would alter by a hair's-breadth the policy of the ex-Colonial Secretary? It would not alter the policy, though it might, he thought, operate in a manner altogether detrimental to the right hon. Gentleman's official career. He could not help sympathising, on the first day the House met, with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in having, on the first occasion when he addressed the House in the great office to which he had been called, had such a very bad chance of making a good speech. As he listened to his right hon. friend putting forth all the equivocations and generalities which constituted so large a part of the Government case, he could not help thinking that all the time his heart was on the third bench below the gangway, the headquarters of a policy which, think what they would of it, and some of them thought very ill of it, was a policy put forward with faith and courage.

He had not the smallest personal grievance against his right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham, though the course which the right hon. Gentleman had adopted might possibly end in his exclusion from that House. [Opposition cries of "No."] The right hon. Gentleman was in earnest, and believed in the cause he was fighting for, and believing that it was the best policy for the country and the Empire he was bound to take all constitutional steps necessary to secure the adoption of his policy. But he could not help feeling a certain amount of resentment against a Government, which was prepared to use to the full all the machinery of political excommunication for the sake not of a policy, a principle, or a cause, but of a mere Parliamentary dodge designed to keep in office during a few precarious months the existing Administration. He thought, in the face of tactics like that, they must be pardoned if they felt a certain amount of resentment. But it did not matter very much what the Prime Minister said now. For the next ten years the hall-mark of a Conservative would be willingness to work whole-heartedly for the policy of the Member for Birmingham. The Conservative Party had resolved to trust itself to the instinct of the right hon. Gentleman. He supposed about four years ago there was no man in this country better able to gauge and measure beforehand what great masses of the electorate were ready to do. The Conservative Party were trusting a great deal to that instinct to-day. Sometimes he wondered whether perhaps it was wrong, and whether the right hon. Gentleman had lately been so much concerned in managing affairs outside this country that the nice balance of his judgment in domestic affairs had been destroyed. He sometimes wondered whether the right hon. Gentleman might not be found celebrating the relief of Mafeking in a world which was moving on to quite different occupations. But whether his instinct was right or wrong, there was no doubt about his power. Could any hon. Gentleman who heard the speech which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham delivered last week in the debate on the war, and who watched the effect of it on the Ministerial Benches, who saw the Government supporter's admiration of that speech, doubt that so long as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham lived he would hold the Conservative Party in his grip? Could anyone doubt that those who belonged to that Party would have to accept the terms he was prepared to offer and submit to the policy which he was determined to dictate. There were some of them, and he did not think he was the only one, who were not prepared to accept those terms or submit to those tests, and in the division which was going to close this debate they would have to think as what Mr. Gladstone said in a famous debate, not for the moment only but for the years that were to come.

He would now turn from the free-trade speech of the President of the Board of Trade to the free-trade speech of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade. He did not wish to treat the retaliatory policy of the Government with any disrespect, and he would confine himself almost entirely to that particular part of it which was put forward by his hon. friend. Of course, he did not quarrel with the description of the speech as a free-trade speech, but it approached exactly the same conclusions as if the speaker had been a protectionist. He drew exactly the same conclusions, and the result of this free-trade policy if carried out would end in the establishment of duties and a general tariff which would not be wholly dissimilar from the objects which protectionists had in view. He confessed he wondered that members of the Government were so anxious to assume all these immense extensions of their functions. No doubt there were some things which a Government must do, not because the Government would do them well, but because nobody else would do them at all. What was there in the experience which they had had of the Government during the last few years to encourage them to countenance such a great extension of the administrative functions of any British Government. Was the information on which they had acted always so very accurate? The hon. and learned Member who sat opposite told the House of the mistakes made in the conduct of the late war, and he spoke of the complaints made by various Cabinet Ministers of the information supplied to them by their expert advisers. Only a year ago he himself heard the Prime Minister assure the House with the utmost confidence that on the authority of his legal advisers there was no possibility of successfully conducting a prosecution against Mr. Whitaker Wright. If such astounding errors, made no doubt in perfect good faith, could creepin to the administration of a Government in regard to matters so entirely within its own province as war and justice, how absurd it was to invite them to embark upon this immense extension of their functions into the far more complicated and unmeasured difficulties of commerce and of speculation. When a tariff or treaty had been adopted and some costly error had been discovered in it, the Prime Minister would say the Government had trusted to their commercial advisers, and that, if there had been any error, it was not the fault of the Government or their advisers, but of some defect in the state of the economic law. The Member for West Birmingham would add that the tariff would have worked perfectly well if it had not been for the speeches of the Leader of the Opposition and the traitorous intrigues of the foreign members of the Cobden Club. There was such a thing as pressure. Some time ago the Prime Minister said it would not be proper to put Members of the House on a Commission to inquire into trade-union law, because of the pressure to which they would be subjected. He remembered the late Postmaster - General stating that nothing would be more improper than to put an hon. Member of the House on a Committee to rearrange and consider the wages of the Post Office servants because of the pressure that organisation could put upon Members of Parliament.

There were three perfectly distinct kinds of pressure which could be exerted upon a protectionist Government. First, there was corruption, direct and indirect. Then there was the pressure on individual Members who would not get returned unless they were willing to go in on the basis of obtaining as great trade concessions for their own constituencies as they possibly could. Everybody looked at the tariff from his own point of view. A truly scientific tariff was one a man was able to arrange for himself in the interests of the Empire and the working classes. That was why the hon. Member for Rochester felt sure that no tariff would be complete which did not include a stiff duty on imported cement, and why the Conservative candidate in St. Albans felt that no tariff would be really scientific which did not provide for the free admission of straw plaits. Then there was the third class of pressure—the pressure of organised interests upon political leaders. He expected that if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham were present he would have admitted that he had already learned something about that kind of pressure from his experience in forming his Tariff Commission. A genteel instance of the pressure was seen in the fact that a year ago the ex-Colonial Secretary would not have paid much attention to the opinion of the right hon. Member for Sleaford, but today he had to shelter himself behind the right hon. Gentleman, because he was believed to be the representative of the great landed interest without whose support no scheme of protection had the slightest chance of passing. There was nothing to justify the assumption by the Government of new burdens which experience had shown them to be little competent to bear, and which their successors would unhesitatingly refuse.

Mr. Winston Churchill.

The Secretary to the Board of Trade referred to the argument with which Members had been made familiar in *The Times*, and which had been frequently put forward by that able young gentleman who spent his afternoons in writing letters over the signature "Tariff Reformer," and his evenings in writing leading articles saying how excellent and conclusive those letters were. He was surprised that his hon. friend the Secretary to the Board of Trade in his speech had not distinguished between two perfectly distinct kinds of dumping which were hardly ever present in combination. There were two distinct causes which led to the sale of goods in this country at prices unremunerative to the producer. One was the deliberate attempt of one set of traders to smash and ruin another set of traders and to capture their business. Free-traders and protectionists alike would condemn that form of commercial piracy. But it was not only practised by foreigners against Englishmen, it was practised by German against German, Frenchman against Frenchman, and, above all, by American aganst American. [OPPOSITION cries of "Birmingham."] He did not say that they had any occasion to make allusion to old and he believed libellous statements. If a gigantic conspiracy could be proved on the part of a foreign country against any of our principal industries, and it could be shown that the intervention of the Government would save that industry, while its abstention would allow it to be destroyed, what Government would refuse to propose, and what House of Commons would refuse to pass legislation to deal with the matter? He asked hon. Members not to imagine that a free-trade Government would not be able to deal with great trusts. Why! that was the only Government that could deal with them. President Roosevelt, the powerful head of the American Executive, had been practically powerless in dealing with the great combinations which supported the Republican Party. A free-trade Government caring nothing for great trusts would be able to intervene with crushing effect were it proved that they were injurious to the general interests of the people.

The greater part of the dumping in this country did not arise from the cause just stated, but from the desire of foreign countries to preserve their own market, to be able to charge their people what they liked, and to get rid of any over production. The system of protection which prevailed in Germany stimulated production at the expense of consumption. The protectionist fallacy was to imagine that production was the only thing that mattered. Prosperity depended upon not only the volume of production, but also the harmonious relation between production and the consuming power. He did not deny that dumping was an uneconomic operation, that artificial prices whether high or low were uneconomic and operated in restraint of trade. But the question must be considered as a whole. It was necessary to look, not only at the effects of dumping here, but also at the conditions which gave rise to it. The House was entitled to ask the Government what was their plan for dealing with dumping. It was all very well to talk about being anxious to shut out unfair competition, but how were they going to discriminate between the two? It was obvious that "dumped" steel was the cheapest of steel, and any tariff framed to shut out that must *à fortiori* shut out all articles produced at a higher price. He did not deny there was a dislocation caused by dumping, but the contention of the free-traders was that, on the whole, the assailant was nearly always more injured than the victim, that in nearly every case we were able to make a profit out of the transaction, that the conditions which gave rise to dumping were unhealthy and wasteful, that although they might result in profit to the manufacturers who were lucky enough to "rig the market" they were a gross injustice to the mass of the population, that they were the direct result of protective tariffs, and that the only remedy they could apply, if indeed there was any remedy, would be to establish in our own country those evil conditions which we discover abroad. They heard something last session about "jam and pickles." The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had asked, both in the House and on the platform, how many people who had been turned out of the sugar refineries had found employment in stirring up jam pots and filling bottles of pickles. Well, the figures had been ascertained. In 1891 there were 5,700 persons employed in sugar refineries, and ten years later that number was reduced to 2,400, showing a loss of 3,300. The despised trades of jam and pickles, which employed in 1891 30,000 persons, in 1901 employed 41,000 persons, thus accommodating 6,700 more persons than were displaced by any injury that our sugar refineries had suffered from dumping. The French had a proverb, "Drive away nature and it returns at a gallop." So it was with the high tariffs of foreign countries. Although here and there they were able to create trade, they deprived the people of the opportunity of moving forward into those high-grade employments where labour was more varied and more generously rewarded, and leadership in which was the greatest mark of industrial strength in the present condition of the world.

Now, his hon. friend preached one thing in this House, and quite another doctrine outside. They had been called upon not merely to make a mere modification of free trade. It was a complete repudiation which they had been asked to make. He would read what the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade said when he addressed a meeting in the country. The hon. Gentleman had got up a more refined and up-to-date version for the House of Commons; but he painted with rather a bolder touch in the constituencies. His hon. friend said that there were £150,000,000 worth of manufactured goods imported into the country, which represented a loss in wages of between £70,000,000 and £80,000,000, and he thought that a large part of that sum might, by a stroke of the pen, be secured to the British workmen without any loss to the country. Now, that was a startling development of the free-trade theory. Was that the opinion of the Board of Trade; was that fairly supported by the great Department of which he was one of the chiefs; was it the view of the President of the Board of Trade? Was the right hon. Gentleman of opinion that if you shut out half the imports into this country we should make all these things in this country in addition to all those we already made?

MR. BONAR LAW said he did not argue that that result would be obtained by shutting out foreign goods, but that we should secure a fair share of the foreign makets.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL said he had quoted the words of the hon. Gentleman, and they seemed to favour the impression that by shutting out the greater part of our imports they would produce greater employment. He was grateful to the hon. Gentleman for correcting him in so friendly a manner, because he was afraid that the hon. Gentleman might apply to him the vitriolic scorn he had used on the unfortunate lawyers who sat beside him on the Treasury Bench. In supporting the doctrines which had been quoted, the hon. Gentleman might be guilty of a fallacy but not of any fraud. But those who regarded that doctrine, in the words of the Duke of Devonshire, as an inversion of fact—if they were to make themselves responsible for supporting its enunciation in any direct manner, would be guilty of a deliberate propagation of error. The importance of this great debate, although it had been robbed of its animation through the absence of the great leaders of the fiscal controversy, extended beyond the limits of our domestic affairs, and even beyond the limits of the British Empire. All the world was concerned in the decision they were going to take. Protectionists and free-traders, rival schools in every country in the world, were watching with the closest attention the discussions in that House. They were waiting with the keenest anxiety the result of the appeal which the right hon. Member for West Birmingham had lodged against the decision of 1846. There were very powerful free-trade movements in Germany, America, and Australia. [AN HON. MEMBER on the GOVERNMENT Benches: No.] Did not the hon. Gentleman know that the Democratic Party in the United States, which was expected to return to power at some time, was pledged to substantial reductions of the tariff? And that the Democratic platform was largely free-trade. His hon. Friend said, "No"; but the House knew perfectly well whether he was right or not. He thought there was a great deal more reason to hope for a reduction of tariffs from free-trade discussions in these foreign countries than from any facilities for commercial diplomacy which the Government were understood to offer. At all events there was something inspiring in the idea of all these millions of German and American free-traders moving forward, in spite of every difficulty and obstacle which ignorance and prejudice could interpose, towards the beacon light we had long upheld. He believed that that movement was fraught with immense consequences to the permanent interests of mankind, and if, at this juncture in the history of free trade, the British people, in spite of the impassioned appeal made to them, and of the popularity of the right hon. Gentleman who made that appeal, in spite of the wealth and influence which supported it—if they found that the British people solemnly affirmed, after sixty years of fighting hostile tariffs with free imports, that the policy of free trade was sound and unimpeachable, that could not fail to be of great advantage to the free-trade cause in these foreign countries. Indeed some of them might live long enough to see the fulfilment of those venturesome predictions of Mr. Cobden. He thought that in the face of the momentous issues which had been thrust upon them the ordinary considerations of which Party should sit on which side of the House, and what Members would be returned to serve in Parliament, seemed small and unworthy. When so much was uncertain, when so much was obscure, and when everything was shifting and manœuvring around them, they must get on to firm ground; and he, for one, would proudly join in the assertion of those great principles of social justice and of economic truth which were embodied in the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Montrose.

*MR. WHITE RIDLEY (Stalybridge) said that the course of the debate had shown two substantial issues presented to the House. The first was as between free trade and protection, and the second was an attempt on the part of nearly every speaker to go beyond and behind the policy which the Prime Minister had initiated. He could not conceive why this should be, except for individual purposes. As he understood it, the policy of the Prime Minister at Sheffield was precisely the same as the policy of the Government at the present moment—viz., the policy of retaliation. Under these circumstances he could not imagine why the tariff-leaguers and the free-fooders should not go into the same lobby at the end of this debate on the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose, and in support of the Government, except for the reason that whereas the majority of the members of the Free Food League distrusted and did not confide in the general policy of the Government, those who supported the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham did trust and confide in the general policy of the Government. He could not see why the members of the Free Food League should taunt the Prime Minister, as the hon. Member for Oldham had done, with having changed the policy of the Party. He had yet to learn that free trade, or what was called free trade, was ever the definite and distinct policy of the Unionist Party. If the records were examined it would be found that very many members of the Unionist or Conservative Party had held strongly that fair trade, as opposed to free trade, was the best thing for the country. That had been an open question for many years, and he had yet to learn that to hold that opinion was inconsistent with loyalty to the Party. It would be remembered that the policy embodied in the death duties had been bitterly attacked by the Party to which he had the honour to belong; but would anyone say that that was the policy of the Conservative Party, because they had not been able to reverse it? In the same way would anyone say that because the Conservative Party had never been able to reverse the policy of free imports that that was the policy of the Unionist Party?

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol had said that the policy of the Government was entirely incompatible with the further policy of preference; but there was no incompatibility between the two policies. The same principle underlay them both. The policy of retaliation, he ventured to think, had for its basis the extension of our area of trade in foreign countries; the policy of preferential tariffs had for its basis the extension of our area of trade in the Colonies. From the point of view he approached the question he did not say that those two policies were incompatible. The policy of retaliation had as its basis the extension of our area of trade in foreign countries and the Birmingham policy had for its object the extension of our area of trade in the Colonies. He admitted there were difficulties to be overcome in both policies in the arrangements of the tariffs and the negotiations with the Colonies, and probably nobody would be entirely satisfied, but because they could not satisfy nobody were they to satisfy nobody, and because they could not have everything they wanted were they going to refuse to take a single step in the direction they desired to go? Were they to consider the question closed because of those difficulties? While this country had been adhering to the present system the other countries had been marching on different lines and had developed their area of trade. The United States and Germany and South Africa had taken real genuine steps in the direction of extending their trade area. Was it not true that England, the greatest trading Empire of the world, had taken no practical steps to really extend her free-trade area. Almost any Member of the House would say if they could get free trade with the Colonies and develop it on the exact lines adopted in the United States, they would support entirely the Birmingham policy. But because they could not get free trade at once were they not going to take a single step? If they would not move in the direction of preference how were they going to get any nearer free trade with the Colonies. The policy they had been pursuing for the last twenty years would not allow free trade even with the Colonies. The argument for continuing the present system was that it had been based upon the moral attitude, but he could not see that free trade was more moral than protection. That argument rested on the theory that it was wrong as well as impolitic to impose any hindrance upon trade. The whole policy of the right hon. Gentlemen the Member for West Birmingham was to impose taxes in order to remove those hindrances. They might differ as to the way in which they were going to remove those hindrances, but the whole design of tariff reform was to remove and not to impose hindrances. If that idea failed he should not be able to support the Birmingham scheme with the enthusiasm which he now did.

They had been frequently told that those engaged in the cotton trade of Lancashire were opposed to a reversal of the present system. They had been told that whatever industries might benefit from the ex-Colonial Secretary's scheme the cotton industry of Lancashire could not benefit. The Board of Trade returns showed last year a state of things supposed to fill free-importers with pleasure, but when they went closely into the matter they would find that the increased export of manufactured cotton goods represented a decrease in the amount because they were of a higher value, the cost of material having considerably increased on account of the price of cotton in America. Whilst the Board of Trade returns gave this increased value in cotton exports and imports everybody knew that in Lancashire trade depression had become very serious indeed. The House would see, therefore, that the Board of Trade returns were by no means a certain index of the increased prosperity of the country. What was the reason of this ? Was it not because the supply of cotton came almost exclusively from one quarter of the world? What would have been the case if they had adopted a wise colonial policy and developed the growth of cotton in the Colonies. He was aware that it would be impossible to place a tax of any sort or shape on raw cotton. There was an institution called the British Cotton Growing Association on which Members from both sides of the House acted with a common aim, and they were urging the Government to construct railways in East Africa in order to develop the growth of cotton. Free-traders who supported this Association must realise that, by asking for this money for railways, they were asking for a bounty and departing far from the pure milk of the Cobdenite theory. Upon this quesion what he wished to emphasise was that if the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had been put into force years ago the present difficulties in the cotton trade might have been mitigated and there would not have been such a very serious crisis in Lancashire. It was said that the Birmingham policy would cause a rise in the cost of production and that that would be a serious blow to the cotton trade. Had there not now been a great rise in the cost of production ? It was said that they were going to cause the United States of America to put an export duty on cotton, but he would remind the House that the Constitution of the United States would not allow such a duty to be imposed. Of course they could alter the law, but it would have to be done by a two-thirds majority of each State in the Union, and did anyone imagine that those States which grew the cotton were going to vote for an export duty on cotton which would prevent them selling. Was it not more likely that under our present system of allowing unrestricted development abroad efforts would be made to keep their cotton at home and make it into manufactured goods themselves. In recent years the development of manufactured cotton goods in the United States had been out of all proportion to the development of cotton manufacture in England.

They were told that they ought to devote their attention to remedying the social condition of the people, that they ought to pay more attention to education and encourage the enterprise of their manufacturers. Were they to encourage social reforms like the housing of the working classes and local option, and at the same time to neglect the most important of all social reforms which would solve at once the difficulties of the housing and the drink questions, namely, the problem of finding regular employment for the workers. Were they to develop the education of this country in order that men, when educated, would have to go abroad to foreign mills because they could not find a market for their education at home. Free trade had developed in England a race of manufacturers who were not so enterprising, according to the free-traders, as the manufacturers of protectionist Germany. Yet free-traders were constantly saying that free trade developed enterprise and protection discouraged it. He ventured to say that the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham struck at the root of all these things. Some hon. Members thought the Government ought to at once appeal to the country, but in his opinion the Government held a higher trust. He would work whole-heartedly for the policy of preferential tariffs, but he would work for it within the Party; and his reply to the taunt that the Government ought to seek the verdict of the country on fiscal reform was that the Government had committed to their care and defence interests of almost equal importance to the questions of retaliation or preferential tariffs.

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], " That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

" *Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

" We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament. "—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

" At the end of the Question, to add the words, ' But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, " That those words be there added."

*SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham) said it would be recognised in all quarters of the House that the introduction of the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Montrose had been amply justified by the speeches, or many of them, that had been delivered in this debate. He was particularly grateful to the President of the Board of Trade for the speech he had delivered on a previous evening in favour of free trade, as a good many hon. Members had been very doubtful as to what his attitude was in regard to this policy. As he understood the hon. Member for Stalybridge, he advocated the policy of the right hon. Member for Birmingham on the score of the benefit that would be likely to accrue to the cotton trade, a trade in which his constituents were chiefly interested. He himself had always held the opinion that no trade was likely to lose more by any tinkering with tariffs than that particular trade, for the reason that there was no trade in this country to-day that depended more on foreign markets. Eighty per cent of our production was sent abroad, nearly two-thirds of which went to foreign countries. Therefore it would be at once seen how much our cotton trade stood to lose by a policy which might have the effect of interfering with the trade in foreign markets and which might close to us some of the neutral markets of the world. With regard to the trifling imports referred to by the hon. Member, when we considered that £70,000,000 or £80,000,000 was sent out of this country every year in cotton goods and cotton yarns it would be seen that the cotton trade could afford to regard with comparative composure any slight increase in its imports. He held in his hand a resolution passed by a representative meeting of the trade, which was in the following terms—

> "That the great cotton industry of the United Kingdom owes its pre-eminence to, and can only be maintained by, the policy of free trade."

He attached great importance to that resolution, because he knew the character and ability of the men who took part in the discussion of the resolution. A large association with which he happened to be connected had many thousands of workpeople engaged in producing yarns for the German market, and if we became involved in a tariff war with Germany would the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham, or anybody else, guarantee those thousands of workpeople the continuous employment they now enjoyed? It would be poor consolation to those workpeople to be told that although their trade was damaged other trades would benefit or that we could not establish new factories without closing old ones.

The hon. Member for Stalybridge had said, "Because we cannot satisfy everybody are we not to try and satisfy anybody?" but the great danger was lest there should be more people dissatisfied after such legislation than there were before. He believed that more harm than good would be done by legislation of this kind, and that the great masses of the people would be in a worse position after it than they were before. When the census was taken in the United States, census papers were distributed with several columns ruled in them containing questions which had to be answered, and he understood that one of those columns was headed "Condition as to Marriage." When the papers were collected it was found that one man had filled up this column "Hard up before marriage but ten times worse after," and he believed that a good many who were engaged in the industries and commerce of this country would be ten times worse off after this tariff reform had come into operation than they were before. There was no other country in the world where tariff legislation was so risky as it was in this. We had adapted our industries to a free-trade system, and no doubt under that system some of our manufactures had increased abnormally, and had thus become so to speak top-heavy, but that made it all the more important that nothing should be done to jeopardise them because they would be all the more easily upset. The hon. Member had asked whether the cost of production had not been increased owing to the present high price of cotton, but hon. Members would admit that an increase in the cost of production caused by a tariff was an entirely different thing to an increase of the cost of production caused by dear cotton. Dearness of cotton applied equally to all nations, but an increase in the cost of production arising from tariff legislation affected only that country where that tariff legislation was in force. The hon. Member in regretting that preference for the Colonies had not been established years ago, had expressed the opinion that if such had been the case a great deal more cotton would have come from the Colonies, but it was difficult to suppose that that would have been the case unless there had been some discrimination by us against the United States, a discrimination which would be fraught with the greatest danger to this country. It had been alleged that there would be no fear in such a case of an export duty being placed upon raw cotton, because the Constitution of the United States would prevent it. With that he did not quite agree. At present, as he understood the Constitution of the United States, no individual State was allowed to impose an export duty, but Congress was supreme and would have the right to confer that power on any of the States. That disposed of the contention that if we were involved in a tariff war with the United States we should not be in danger of an export duty being placed on her raw cotton.

He cordially approved of the opinion expressed by the hon. Member for Stalybridge when he spoke of the desirability of growing more cotton within the limits of our Empire, and he was extremely glad to observe that that important question had been referred to in the Speech from the Throne. The importance of that it was quite impossible to overstate when one considered that the welfare and happiness of hundreds of thousands of people in the cotton manufacturing districts were entirely dependent upon it, and that being so, the Government could undertake no other productive work which could compare with it. It had constantly been argued with perfect truth that our Empire was extremely vulnerable owing to the extent on which we were dependent on foreign nations for food and raw materials. One way in which the Empire could be made less vulnerable than it was now was by growing larger supplies within the Empire. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade had referred to the percentage of unemployed, which, he said, during the last half of last year showed an increase; if the hon. Member took into account the fact that the cotton trade was suffering, even a year ago more or less owing to the cotton famine, then in all fairness he must admit that the increase in the percentage of the unemployed in that trade during the last half of last year was in no way connected with the fiscal question. The same condition of things obtained now. He therefore warned those who were in favour of tariff reform not to quote the cotton trade as an instance of the need of tariff legislation, because the troubles from which the cotton trade suffered were quite apart from any such question, and tariff legislation would tend to aggravate rather than to remove them.

The hon. Gentleman, although it was late in the day to re-open that question, seemed to argue that where a tariff was imposed the foreigner would pay it and not the importer, but it must be obvious to everyone that in the long run the consumer must pay it. What was the testimony of Germany on this point? It was to be found in the remarkable words in the preamble to the new German tariff law.

> "Prices in the home market have, so far as the circumstances prevailing during the last decade permit a judgment, experienced a rise corresponding pretty accurately to the amount of the duty."

The hon. Member the Secretary to the Board of Trade seemed to plume himself on the legislation last year with regard to the Sugar Convention. Did the hon. Member or any of those associated with him contemplate at the time the Sugar Convention was passed all the consequences which had ensued since. That Convention prevented bounty-fed sugar coming to this country from Russia, and what did she do, she immediately cast about for a means of retaliation, and discovered it in Indian tea. Naturally the Indian tea planter would want to know why his product should be penalised upon entering Russia, seeing that India had done nothing to deserve it.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR pointed out that Russia had quite as much reason to complain of the action of India as of our actions on account of the countervailing duties she imposed upon Russian sugar.

*SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND said that the right hon. Gentleman could not deny that Russia's action with regard to Indian tea was the direct result of the Sugar Convention, and, that being so, the Indian tea planter would naturally wish to know why, at this particular juncture, he should be penalised in this way in the interest of the West Indian planter. He asked whether such legislation did not tend rather to promote the disruption of the Empire than its consolidation. When a Government embarked on fiscal legislation generally all sorts of results were apt to occur which were not contemplated at the time when such legislation was initiated. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had in his speech two days previously said he was prepared to fight for free trade. There was a by-election now going on in Mid Hertfordshire in which the Conservative candidate was not a free-trader. Would the right hon. Gentleman fight for free trade in that constituency? If so, he would be compelled to oppose the Conservative candidate, who had described himself as a "whole-hogger," which he presumed to mean that he was prepared to support the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham in its entirety, though on the face of it it looked as if a "whole-hogger" went further, seeing that bacon was excluded from the Birmingham programme. The Conservative candidate in that fight, in a circular which he had issued to the electors, had stated that the British workman's savings were the lowest in Europe. He contended that that was not true. It might be true with regard to that portion of their savings which was deposited in the Savings Banks, but it was not true as to the aggregate savings, and, even if the deposits in the Savings Banks were regarded as the sole test, it would be found that Denmark and Switzerland, two more or less free countries, headed the list, which rather tended to strengthen the free-trade argument. The fact of the Savings Bank deposits of the British workmen being the lowest was easily explained. In the first place the interest allowed to depositors was far lower than in any other country; next, the amount allowed to be deposited was limited, but the great reason of all was that here there were other means offered to the depositors for investing their savings in the great building and friendly societies and in other ways, and it would be seen that he was quite justified in controverting the statement issued in that circular. The savings of the British workmen were, he believed, the highest in Europe instead of being the lowest. He was not afraid of any discussion so far as free trade was concerned provided always that those who gained by that policy would speak out as loudly as those who alleged they were injured by it, but the tendency was rather to cry out when the shoe pinched, and, on the other hand, to keep quiet and certainly not to proclaim from the house-tops the fact that under a particular system people were doing well. Now that the question of fiscal reform had been raised the country would insist upon its being thrashed thoroughly out, therefore he would not disapprove of the appointment of a Royal Commission, upon which every shade of opinion should be represented, to investigate the matter. What were the features of the Board of Trade returns of which the tariff-reformers at present complained? First they complained of the largeness of our imports, but when it was pointed out that 70 or 80 per cent. of those imports were raw materials and foodstuffs, he believed everyone would rather see them increase than diminish. Then they complained of the smallness of the exports of manufactured goods. There was not a nation in the world which could hold a candle to us in that matter. If he found a man objecting to the smallness of our exports to protected countries he quite agreed that it would be most desirable to increase them, but he absolutely denied that the policy now before the country was likely to do so. In his judgment it was dangerous to dogmatise on the figures of the Board of Trade because they related wholly to the external commerce of the country. In his own business, if he found the home trade sufficient to absorb all his production he would not send travellers abroad to push his trade in foreign markets. It was only when the home trade slackened that he would do that, therefore, if these statistics were an unsafe test as to the condition of our trade, it was little short of a crime for the country to be committed to a reversal of its fiscal policy on the strength of them. A far safer test of fiscal policy than imports and exports was, in his opinion, the general condition of the people at large. Were they well fed, were they well clothed, and well housed? Not so well, perhaps, as we should like to see them, but far better than in any protected country in Europe, which were the countries now held up to us for imitation.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster): No.

*SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND said he thought it was suggested that we should imitate the fiscal policy of the protected countries of Europe.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: As I interrupted the hon. Member perhaps I ought to explain my interruption. We argue from the model of the United States.

*SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND said he was of course referring to European countries, the United States being in a category of its own. Measured by the standard he had referred to, our fiscal policy had not been a failure; on the contrary, it had been a great success, but protection would lead to monopoly, and in proportion as they had monopoly they had an unequal distribution of wealth and consequent discontent and dissatisfaction.

It put him in mind of a verse he read in an American paper—

"A millionaire I'd like to be
Alack 'tis scarcely fair,
Another gets the million
And I only get the 'aire.'"

There would be an increase in the cost of living and of production, and any such increase would paralyse competition in the great neutral markets of the world. If they had protection they would run the risk of losing most-favoured-nation treatment. Other countries had tried the policy of retaliation and the result had been that more frequently tariffs had been raised instead of being lowered. One great advantage of our present system was that it attracted the buyers of the world to our markets, and anyone who had anything to sell knew that it was an advantage to be able to gain the ear of buyers. A vague mandate for retaliation would be like giving the Government a blank cheque. Of that they had had experience which had not been very satisfactory. It was clear that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had unduly magnified colonial interests, minimised the interests of this country, and ignored altogether those of India. The Colonies, so far as he had observed, wished for nothing more than even-handed justice, which they would regard as essential to the permanent maintenance of a strong Empire. He had attended the Imperial Congress of Chambers of Commerce in Canada, and he gathered that the Canadians generally would repel any system of preference which would have the effect of injuring the interests of the mother country, which injury would speedily react upon them. The Colonies stood by the mother country in her distress, and in face of such splendid loyalty every preference which the wit of man could devise seemed unworthy of consideration, inasmuch as it sought to put the existence of the Empire on a cash basis. A fiscal union would involve conflicting and contradictory aims and therefore would not consolidate the Empire. To persist in it would lead to friction, strife, and jealousy. Fiscal reform did not offer the best solution of the difficulty. The best solution would be found in a political union—the formation of a consultative, rather than a legislative body, and of this even the Prime Minister did not disapprove. That would be a thousand times more hopeful a solution of the problem how best to draw the Colonies more closely to the mother country.

SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER said he had always held that the American case could not be advantageously used for purposes of comparison in this controversy. The American Continent was in itself the greatest free-trade continent in the world. Forty-eight States, which were formerly under a system of protection, had now formed themselves into a free-trade continent, possessing a mineral and natural wealth which put it quite beyond any analogy in our own country. The general social condition of America was good, there was a perpetual stream of emigration into the country from protected countries, still apprehension was being created in the minds of thinking people in America because of the intolerable tariffs which had been brought about by the multi-millionaires. He was of opinion that the discussion had fully justified the Amendment, couched as it was in reasonable and comprehensive terms. It had given an opportunity to all free-traders, wherever they might sit, to combine together to give expression to their emphatic condemnation of the protectionist proposals of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, proposals which had been put forward with the greatest assiduity during last autumn, and especially those which related to taxation on food, though for his part he thought it operated with equal force with regard to the proposed taxes on manufactured goods. What was the second object of the Amendment? He took it to be to get an answer from the Government, with regard to which those who were responsible in the Government had spoken with more than one voice in their replies. The object was to get, if possible, from the Government a clear and unmistakable declaration of policy with regard to the fiscal question, for on the distinctness and clearness of that pronouncement might depend not merely some scores of votes in that House, but in the country, he thought, hundreds of thousands of votes. On its directness also depended, in his opinion, the integrity and future ascendancy of the Party now led by the Prime Minister.

What he wanted to ask the House was this: Could any free-trader feel any assurance from the reply given by the President of the Board of Trade? It certainly had differed from the pronouncements of other members of the Government. What, then, was the impression left on their minds by it? There was no doubt at all that protection was distinct and absolutely different from retaliation. The objects of protection were to exclude foreign imports with the supposed idea of fostering home industries. He did not propose now to go into the merits of that question. With regard to retaliation, the proposal of the Government was to temporarily restrict the import of certain articles from certain countries which were behaving most hostilely towards us in the matter of tariffs. Now, whatever might be said as to the merits of the principle of retaliation, the object was to increase the area of trade and to enlarge our markets. They had been told that Parliament was to have a decisive voice in regard to any retaliatory proposals that might be made by the Executive Government in the future, and that was very important, for, if retaliation was to be of any value to this country, it should be made as difficult as possible for the Executive Government to carry it out. If it was first necessary in each case to get the sanction of Parliament, they would not find such proposals very frequently made. Our chief aggressors with regard to high tariffs were Russia, Germany, and the United States, and if they examined the imports from those countries they would find that they consisted in a large measure of food or raw material for our industries, and if a tax were put on them as suggested it would be most fatal to the interests of this country. It might be possible, however, to suggest a small tax on goods coming from less important countries in Europe, as for instance Portugal. If we put a duty on port we might influence Portugal to give us the most-favoured-nation treatment, but that surely was not a very heroic measure, and it could not form a plank in the platform of any Government seeking the support of the electors of the country. They were told to distinguish between the two policies, but, having carefully examined the question, he was unable to see how they could distinguish and look upon as separate policies the policy of preference and the policy of protection. Preference must mean a tax on food or raw material, and that was certainly protection. All were in agreement with the objects preference sought to attain. They all desired to draw closer the ties between the component parts of the Empire, but, as had already been shown, it was impossible to devise a scheme of preference satisfactory to all parts of the Empire unless it included food and raw material. It was not a sane or a practicable proposal.

Another argument, which at first sight was attractive, was that by a scheme of preference this Empire might ultimately become a self-contained empire, independent of all other countries in the world, but close examination showed that that was a very Utopian idea, which could not possibly be carried out. It was assumed that the Empire would be sufficiently productive to send us, in all years, the quantity of food we consumed, but it was only necessary to go back a few years to see that a concatenation of circumstances might result in the wheat supplies from all parts of the Empire being absolutely inadequate for the requirements of these islands. In 1897 there was famine in India, drought in Australia, and a failure of the wheat crop in Canada, with the result that from all quarters of the Empire we received only 7,500,000 cwt. of wheat, whereas in 1902, when the adverse circumstances had passed away, the quantity received was 25,000,000 cwt. Owing to our present system of open markets, the price of wheat was not in any way affected in that adverse year, but the adoption of a scheme to debar or discourage the free and rapid introduction of wheat from all parts of the world, would in such a year lead to great fluctuations of price, to the detriment of all classes of the community. It was a curious fact that the scheme would seek to discourage the introduction of produce from those very countries, especially Argentina, in which British capital was most interested. Little had been heard during the debate of an argument which had been used with effect in the country, that the proposed taxation would not fall on the consumer. The facts in the Blue-book supported the obvious truth, that ultimately the purchaser must pay the impost. A comparison of prices in New South Wales under free trade and under the system of protection afforded a notable illustration. In 1899 prices under free trade were—beef, 3d.; cheese, 6d.; mutton, 1½d. per pound; and flour, 10s. 3d. per 100lb.; under the protective tariff the prices were 5d., 8d., 4d., and 28s. The cost of clothing also had increased by 25 to 40 per cent. That was an absolutely conclusive proof that the consumer paid. The more the proposal was examined into, the more it would be seen how weak was the case of the protectionists and how unanswerably strong was the case of the free-trader. It was no answer to say that because other countries were thriving under protection we should do the same. The conditions of this country were totally different from those of any other country. We were absolutely dependent on our markets being open to all the world, whether for raw material or for manufuctured goods. He defied any Commission appointed by the Government to define the difference between raw material and manufactured goods. What was raw material one moment was manufactured material the next, and what was manufactured material for one industry was the raw material of another. The House was in possession of the Prime Minister's opinion on his own policy of retaliation, and, vaguely, of his opinion on the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham; they also had the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham on his own proposals, but they had not yet heard his opinion on retaliation. It was true they had his opinions of twenty years ago, when, in the cogent manner of which he was such a master, he put forward unanswerable arguments against such a policy, but nothing could be more interesting than to have his present opinions on the subject.

But it was not so much with the merits of the case they had to deal; they spoke for themselves; it was with the methods by which this controversy was being carried on. The country had a right to demand that the issue should be made clear and intelligible. Did the Government commit themselves really and truly to protection, or did they not? The President of the Board of Trade said a majority in the elections would not entitle the present Government to adopt preference or protection; but what would the right hon. Member for Birmingham say to that? In the absence of the Prime Minister—which they all deplored —they could gather his views on the subject only from his pamphlet, his speeches, and his letters, and, so far as he could judge, the whole balance of the Prime Minister's inclination tended towards protection. But what about his colleagues? Earlier in the debate he had had a slight altercation with a member of the Cabinet. As the House was aware, the President of the Local Government Board, a fortnight ago, went down to Wiltshire and made a speech against him and on behalf of a candidate in the Government's cause. He did not desire to quarrel with the right hon. Gentleman on that account. No doubt he was actuated by sincere convictions; but whether that action was the result of the best judgment he would leave the right hon. Gentleman to decide. On that occasion, the fiscal case evidently not being strong enough, the right hon. Gentleman raked up other delinquencies to justify the course he was taking, but he was rather unfortunate in the two matters he selected—the Army and education. As to the former, however instrumental its critics might have been in bringing it about, the fact remained that the whole scheme of the Army had been radically changed since last year, and if the present scheme had been then before the House he would not have felt bound to associate himself with any attack upon it. With regard to education, it was unnecessary to say anything, as he had already given his reasons for the course he took. The London Education Bill undoubtedly underwent a great transformation in the House, and emerged a much better measure than it entered. But it was on public grounds he complained of the action of the right hon. Gentleman. It was all very well for the right hon. Gentleman to say he acted, not as a Cabinet Minister, but as an elector.

A gentleman of his prominence could not divest himself of his official position. The right hon. Gentleman had said that protection was a scientific method of taxation in order to obtain revenue. It seemed to him, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman was sailing in his own boat, because taxation for revenue formed no part of the proposals of the Prime Minister nor of those of the Member for West Birmingham. He believed that the Government's policy of retaliation was the stepping-stone to the wider scheme of the Member for West Birmingham. If that were so, why was the right hon. Gentleman still a member of the Government? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham frankly and fairly left the Government when he took up the cudgels for protection, and it appeared to him that many other Members at present on the Treasury Bench ought to have done likewise. He was drawn to only one conclusion—and it had been strengenthed considerably by the speeches in that debate—that the Government were really protectionists, but had not the courage to say so. He should continue to hold that opinion unless the Government would act up to the pledges given by the President of the Board of Trade. But something more was required. Free-traders should ask for the removal of all protectionists from the Government and of all doubtful free-traders. Orders should also be given and carried out for the immediate withdrawal of all Tariff Reform League branches in the constituencies, and for all Conservative associations to abandon the policy of protection. More than half had adopted the full blown policy; he said that these conditions were the irreducible minimum of any free-trader who was worthy of the name. Whatever might take place in the division at the end of this discussion was quite immaterial, for he was convinced that the country was sick and tired of this ambiguity and shuffling. The electors would insist upon a definite and clear issue, and only those who took up a definite position one way or the other would be Members of the next Parliament.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said it would have been infinitely better if this subject could have been discussed apart from Party feeling, which was likely to take them away from the real question of what was the best position to take up for the welfare of the country in regard to their fiscal arrangements. He was brought up a free-trader, and he always had an inclination to the opinion that free trade had done a great deal for this country. Under what was called free trade, there was no doubt that the country had developed enormously, but from the discussion that had already taken place, one could not help noticing that many other circumstances had been at work. Even the mover of the Amendment admitted that everything was not as he should desire it in regard to the fiscal policy and commercial relations of this country with other parts of the world. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose acknowledged that there were questions, positions, and circumstances which they could not consider satisfactory, and which, as a great commercial nation, they would all gladly see changed and put in a way that would commend itself to their better judgment, and which would be to the interests of the community. They talked very glibly of free trade and protection. He did not see why those terms should be matters of reproach, because all sections of the House had only one desire, and that was the promotion of the well-being of the country. They must acknowledge that they had never yet had free trade, although they had had free imports. A good deal of difficulty had arisen because they described these things in vague terms without absolutely defining their real meaning. It might be argued that free imports were a good thing for a country, but they could not say that free imports could in any sense be called, or at any rate in the Cobden sense, free trade. Cobden's idea was a totally different thing to free imports, and his whole idea was that free trade would lead different nations of the world to produce those things which they could produce to the best advantage. Nobody argued that they had got anything approaching that state of things now. He had recently visited most of the chief cities in America, and when he went to the great stores there, he was told that they had no English goods, and could not sell them.

Of course, as an Englishman, he resented that, and he could not understand how there could be free trade when English goods were excluded. They all agreed that it was outrageously unfair that these tariff walls should be raised so that they could not get British goods into those countries.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): We are treated no worse than any other country.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY said that two blacks did not make a white. The object of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was that something should be done to put a stop to this outrageously unfair state of things. Lord Avebury had stated that if there was an outrageous case of unfairness all they had got to do was to bring it to the notice of the House, and the Government of the day should bring in a Bill to put a stop to it. He had been a Member of the House for twenty years, and session after session they had tried to do something in connection with the sugar bounties, and it had taken twenty years to do anything. The object of the Sugar Convention Bill was to do away with the gross unfairness of competition in the sugar trade, and that object had now been accomplished. He knew the difficulties of retaliation, but he could not believe that it was beyond the power of this country to retaliate. It was reasonable and fair, he thought, that somehow or another the Government of the day should be invested—he did not suggest with a free hand, but with the power of retaliation. He saw no difficulty in that. The simple fact that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had brought this question up had already produced an effect in Germany in regard to their threats towards Canada and Australia, and if simple discussion of the question produced that effect, surely it would be possible to give the Government some power of retaliation by which they would be able to break down some of the tariff barriers that now existed.

Having had a great deal to do with the working classes and the poor, there were two points he wished especially to put forward. First of all there should be ample employment for the people, and secondly cheap food for the people. Those two things were essential, and, in his opinion, of the two plentiful employment was of more importance than cheap food. Some people were afraid of food being taxed, but he would remind them that they had not got free food at the present time, and they never had had it. Even the free-fooders did not suggest that they should have free food, for they had got taxed food at the present time. They taxed tea, which was almost a necessity, and sugar, and there was another item which was almost food to the very poorest which was taxed, and that was tobacco. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] He knew something of the extreme poor, and he knew that many of them would sooner be deprived of some of their food than their tobacco. He did not think it was a good thing to announce to other nations that whatever happened England would never tax food. He thought if America was absolutely convinced that this country was in earnest they would be prepared to bargain and reduce their tariffs. In the United States they laughed and smiled when we talked to them about our tariff system. If the United States were convinced that we were in earnest, and determined to have a war of tariffs and retaliation for such time as was necessary, he believed that they would give way to a very great extent. He did not wish to see tariffs increased indefinitely, but he was in favour of putting them on until they secured fairer trade for this country. If America would give way, he was sure that Canada, and Germany, and other countries would also give way. With regard to the importation of goods, there was no doubt that the great increase in the importation of goods, which used to be made in this country, was a serious question, and a very disquieting fact. [AN HON. MEMBER: Why?] He knew something of the poorer districts of London, and he considered this state of things disquieting, because he knew that the poor people could do this work, and were willing to do it, and yet those articles were imported ready-made, free of duty, from abroad. This House was always passing legislation to make the manufacture of goods more costly, and he did not object to such legislation. The Factory Acts and the Sanitary Laws were passed to secure the well-being of the workers, and they were quite right, and proper, and humane; but it was an extraordinary anomaly that, while in this country they increased the difficulties of production in this way, they did not mind goods being produced abroad under conditions which were not allowed in this country.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): Can the hon. Member mention a country where the laws for industrial production are worse than in this country?

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY said that he could mention every country in Europe. While they had laid these restrictions upon the manufacturers of this country, they had allowed foreign goods to be imported to compete with them, which had been made without those conditions, and thus foreigners were permitted to undermine, undercut, and undersell British manufacturers. It might be argued that the importation of foreign goods was due to several causes, and he was not going to say that the sole reason why those goods came in was on account of our fiscal system. But their fiscal system was at any rate one of the reasons, although there might be other reasons as well. It might be true that there was want of enterprise amongst British manufacturers, and it might also be said that trades-union rules had had some effect; some might argue with proof that the people of this country wasted a good deal of their resources upon alcohol; but these after all were only items, and one item certainly was the fiscal system. Was it not reasonable that before a man employed capital in an enterprise in which he would have to pay wages, and add to the wealth and prosperity of the country, that he should be protected from being undersold by the "dumping" system which was allowed at present? There was no doubt that this uncertainty of an enterprise being remunerative, and the possibility that a man, after investing large sums of money in machinery and business, might be hampered or injured by foreign competition of an unfair character, tended to retard enterprise and decrease that employment upon which the welfare of the whole country depended. To meet an evil of this kind he thought exceptional measures ought to be taken, and surely that was not unreasonable. He did not agree that this country was nearly ruined, and many people talked very exaggeratedly upon this subject. Wise merchants did not wait to be ruined before considering their position, but they looked at the signs of the time and regulated their businesses accordingly. He thought the Government ought to do the same. The amount of manufactured cotton goods, hardware, cutlery, building materials, iron and steel, and other articles imported into this country were increasing in amount and had largely increased during the last three or four years, and these were matters which required their very careful consideration.

He did not wish to say anything that he ought not to, but it was a little difficult to understand the exact position in which they stood. But he gathered that the action of the Government was to see why we were getting into the state in which we were getting, and whether anything could be done to stop it. No doubt at the present time the country was not in an extremely bad way. Trade during the last decade had been good, but if there were indications that, owing to the increase in the imports of manufactured goods there might in the future be a want of employment in this country, he thought the Government were right in considering the fiscal question. There was to some people a sort of fetish in the very name free trade, and they would not allow anybody to say a word against it. He was afraid that it was an image only of tinsel and not of solid gold. Whether the Government went as far as the right hon. Member for West Birmingham he did not quite know. He ventured to say, at one time, that they could not by any possible means exempt food from this subject if they were going to resort to retaliation with certain countries. He thought it was not honest to say that they could resort to retaliation unless they had a perfectly free hand. A question allied to this was that of preferential tariffs. He knew the arrangement of preferential tariffs with the Colonies was extremely difficult. When he was in Canada last year he crossed to the Pacific and learned much by the way. He came to the conclusion that Canada was quite able to look after herself. He found there was a kindly and loyal feeling towards us in every way, but he thought they would resent any sort of charitable patronage. He was sure they would resent the infliction of any hardship on the life of the people here in order to promote their welfare. Still he could not help thinking that it was not beyond the wit of man somehow or other to give our colonies as much preferential favour as we could. There were many ways in which we could help the Colonies if we chose to do so. He felt that part and parcel of our fiscal system should be in every possible way to give them what advantage we could. Although he did not wish to hint or throw out the idea that we were going to buy their support and loyalty by that kind of action, he said that we could by our fiscal system do much to promote their wealth, and we should certainly do so. In the territory of Canada there were enormous fields still undeveloped where foodstuffs could be produced for this country, and he had no doubt that with a little encouragement and assistance that territory might be the means of contributing, not only to the wealth of Canada, but to the bettering of the condition of our people here.

The political position here at the present time was somewhat peculiar. The illness of the Prime Minister was most regrettable, because it was not possible to discuss the fiscal question satisfactorily without him. They were handicapped in all directions. He said so with all respect to hon. Gentlemen on the Government Front Bench. Hon. Gentlemen opposed to the Government seemed to think that they were trying to revert to the fiscal system which existed previous to 1846. He could not conceive of the Government ever having such an idea in their heads. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had no such idea. But we had had nearly sixty years experience of the great change which was then made, and, while many benefits had accrued, it had been found that there were also many drawbacks to the present system. He wished they could dissociate themselves from Party feeling, and address themselves to the consideration of the question, whether, having the experience of the past, they could not do something to make things better. The poverty of the people was due to many causes, and want of employment was no doubt one of the great factors in producing it. If we looked into the fiscal system and revised it, we might be able to devise some way of decreasing the amount of unemployment of the people. He would be no party to anything that would tend to harden the lot of the people of this country, but he was in favour of a careful consideration and revision of our fiscal system with the view of causing an improvement of their condition. It was because he wished to see their condition improved that he would oppose the Amendment.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Burghs) said that the speech which had just been delivered showed the advantage of getting this question debated in the House. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had stated that when he asked for English goods in shops in the United States he was told that there were none to be found. According, however, to the Board of Trade returns last year the United States purchased nearly £23,000,000 of British goods. The statement contradicted by this figure was the sort of statement made on hundreds of platforms. It was this kind of random gossip which had been used to buttress the case for protection, and the advantage of a debate in the House of Commons was that such statements could be tested and answered on the spot. Another advantage of the speech just delivered was that it showed that even an exemplary supporter of the Government was in grave doubt about the position of the Government. He said he did not know whether the Government went so far as the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. That was a perfect justification for the debate. He agreed that it was an unfortunate thing the Prime Minister was not present, because, among other reasons, it afforded a certain excuse to the Government for not giving the House really a full statement of what they were going to do. It was not that they did not know; and he did not think they were entitled to shelter behind the fact that the Prime Minister was absent. This was not the policy of the Prime Minister but of the Cabinet. It was the gospel of the Government, and they had got a dozen of them in the House, and they ought to know something of this gospel of retaliation from these twelve apostles. Throughout the recess they had been fighting protectionist arguments put forward under the auspices of Conservative associations, and what was their surprise to find those arguments thrown over the very first day of the session. At first he thought the President of the Board of Trade had stampeded with the guns, but that was not the fact. It simply meant that the fire was too hot for them, and they were seeking cover. After making protectionist speeches in every constituency, the President of the Local Government Board turned round and charged a Member of the House with having said that the Secretary of the Board of Trade had made a protectionist speech. A few months ago that would have been a compliment. The House was entitled to know the real issue upon which they were to fight. It was a llvery well to pretend to be a free-trader in the House and to use protectionist weapons in the constituencies. It was not playing the game straight. In recent by-elections two poor Government cruisers that took refuge in Port Arthur had been allowed by the Government, without a declaration of war, to be torpedoed by the Tariff Reform League, probably because they were not in the inner harbour. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had said he was willing to give every latitude to hon. Members on his side of the House; but the latitude was in one direction—that was, in the direction of preferential tariff, though the policy of the Government was free trade. There was no latitude in the other direction. It was Long-itude. He appealed to the Government to put an end to this ping-pong playing with the trade of the country.

The President of the Board of Trade was a free-trader on Monday; he was apparently a preferential tariff man on Tuesday. He had been shaking his head ever since. Ministers were as variable as the weather. The only thing they were clear about was dumping. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was allowed to make a speech in the country in favour of preferential tariffs. There ought to be an end to this. It was not fair in any Government. The sudden change in the last two days proved distinctly that the policy had arisen from no national emergency. It was purely due to political emergency; so it changed with political vicissitudes. In 1895 trade was really bad, and armies of the unemployed were parading the streets, but never a word then, and up to the general election, did they hear about the preferential tariff. The moment the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham came back from South Africa he made his speech. Beginning with the by-elections, which showed what he was thinking about, he referred to what he called smaller controversies. He had nothing particular to say about education, and there was loud laughter when he spoke about temperance reform, but when he mentioned local finance, that meaning rates, there was no laughter. The right hon. Gentleman said that education and sobriety were not an atmosphere favourable to the appreciation of the merits of the Conservative Government, and therefore he began to think Imperially. That was where he started. Trade was excellent. Why, only a year before Ministers went about the country saying that we never had had such trade, all of them suggested that that was due to the blessing of having the country governed by themselves and their colleagues. At any rate trade was flourishing, it was splendid, but in a single night it withered like Jonah's gourd. One speech did it all! Agriculture ruined, woollen and cotton going, pearl buttons gone! Never had there been such devastation wrought by a single speech in history. And observe, in the revised editions, some of those trades had been restored by a single stroke of the pen to their former prosperity! The right hon. Gentleman went about the country preaching this doctrine of our impending doom, and curiously enough the ruined people were delighted at the prospect of ruin. They celebrated their ruin in a series of banquets. They rejoiced in the destruction of the tinplate industry at Cardiff, and finished up with a grand spread over ruined trade at the Hotel Métropole, where they toasted the downfall of British trade in the finest champagne. The President of the Tariff Commission was present, but his boon companion, the right hon. Member for Sleaford, was absent. They drank that toast in the finest champagne, but surely they ought to have confined their libations to Tintara! However, one should not expect too great sacrifices to be made in the interests of one's country. At any rate they seemed to have had a good time, for the Chancellor of the Exchequer a day or two afterwards said about the tariff-reformers that they were seeing portents in the air. That was the state of things, everything was going well. We were all ruined, and we were delighted at it. Then came the remedy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who went to Glasgow to unfold it. "We are ruined," cried the right hon. Gentleman, "And what is to be done? The first thing you have to do is to double the supply of pigs." The hope of the country lay in increasing the number of its swine. Well, at first this sort of thing did very well, but the commonsense of the country began to see through it. By-election after by-election showed that after all the people were not to be taken in by all this kind of thing. Then came a change. It was discovered that there was no life in this agitation, and everbody knew perfectly well that it would not survive the political activity of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. It was entirely his creation. There might be a little guerrilla fighting upon the hills of Sheffield, or in that neighbourhood, but the thing was killed. There might be a few faithful followers left who, however, like the wild Boers in the late war remained out of sight. That was the reason why downright protectionists, like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford, acclaimed the right hon. the Member for West Birmingham as the greatest statesman that ever lived. If he might be permitted to say it, a fisherman was never a good judge of the size or weight of the salmon that he had caught himself. He did not mean to say that trade was exactly what they would like it to be, but, at any rate, it was on the whole good. It had been excellent, although we were now suffering from depression in some quarters.

There had been a good deal of talk about Scotland, and the iron and steel trade there. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Board of Trade had practically based his case on iron and steel rails, but a very strong supporter of the hon. Gentleman in Scotland, a Conservative, had given him a copy of a report on the progress of the iron and steel trade in Scotland, prepared for, and circulated at, the Glasgow Exhibition. In this report it was stated that in 1883 there were seventy-three steel furnaces in operation, with an output of 290,000 tons, whereas in 1901 there were ninety furnaces in operation, with an output of 945,000 tons; that was, the output had almost quadrupled, notwithstanding trade depression and fluctuations. There had been a steady increase for twenty years. In spite of the competition, especially of our dear cousins across the sea, Scotland was likely to maintain its position, and they were perfectly prepared to fight competition from whatever quarter it came, and to rely on Scotch energy, skill, and enterprise. Protection was really the creed, if he might use the word, of the "funkers." What was the suggestion to meet the difficulty? There was no doubt that dumping was a good, or a bad thing, as they might take it. But if it was a bad thing what was to be done? Retaliation was really a much more dangerous policy than protection, and for this reason. Retaliation was simply an act of war against one particular Power, not for the protection of the whole of your own industries. Take the case of America and the Welsh tinplate trade. We used to sell between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000 worth of tinplates a year to the United States. No doubt that trade had practically disappeared as the result of the hostile tariff set up by America to exclude it from the United States. He was putting the case as strongly as he possibly could. But what happened? Wales was still selling £900,000 worth of tinplates every year to America, while America was not selling sixpenny-worth of her tinplates here. [An HON. MEMBER on the GOVERNMENT Benches: They will soon.] That showed how much the hon. Member knew about the matter. The Americans could not sell tinplates within 6s. or 7s. a box, of what the Welsh makers could do, simply because these had got their raw materials much cheaper. Suppose we acted on the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who said—

> "If you had something else you could threaten America with then she would not impose these duties."

But, could America do nothing in return? At the present moment we are carrying 59 per cent. of American trade in our ships; we are selling her £900,000 of tin-plates, and she is selling none in return. If you threaten America you must carry out your threat. America is not a country to be threatened. America is a very rich and determined country, and it would suit certain interests in America to have a tariff war with England. It might suit the shipping interests and the tin-plate interests there. The very first thing that America would do would be to give a bounty to American shipping, which would at once reduce our carrying trade with America. At present, America could not get her coal into the Mediterranean, because she could not get a return cargo. If the return freight were paid, as France was doing by bounties to her shipping, America could send her coal to the Mediterranean on better terms than we could. The policy of retaliation would hit our shipping, it would hit the colliers in South Wales, it would hit the consumers throughout the country, by putting up the price of food, and it would lose the £900,000 of tin-plates—the industry that it was intended to benefit. The same thing applied to Germany. Germany did not charge more for our goods, as a matter of fact, than Canada did. Germany did not exclude us from the coasting trade. It might suit Germany to do that in order to increase her own shipping. She wanted men for her own Navy, but at the present moment she was subsidising our Navy by allowing our ships to carry her goods along her own coasts.

Then we were told that we were going to get colonial preferences. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said—

> "Why should you slam the door in the face of Canada and the Colonies."

Who was slamming the doors? The Colonies sent their goods to our markets free. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was speaking in Lancashire. Did he know that the Canadian statistics showed that Lancashire goods were charged 200 per cent. in Canada, and that Lancashire took from £10,000,000 to £15,000,000 worth of Canadian goods, on which not a sixpence was charged. It was simply trifling with the constituencies to address such arguments to them. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman who spoke last that Canada did not want any preference. He went to Canada a short time ago and met there a gentleman who originally came from West Birmingham, where he had been an artisan, and knew nothing about farming. He began farming in Canada ten years ago, had now 200 acres of land of his own, and a commodious lumber house. He was worth between £1,500 and £2,000, and talked of returning to West Birmingham. If that gentleman had remained in West Birmingham he would still have been working there, getting old, and looking forward to the old-age pension which the right hon. Member for West Birmingham had promised him ten years ago. What was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham doing? He was working hard to tax the food of the people of this country, in order to enable the gentleman he had spoken of to add another £1,000 to his £2,000. That was a monstrous proposition, and no farmer in Canada had ever asked for it. Colonial preference was interfering with the progress of free trade in Canada. The Conservatives in Canada did not propose anything of the kind. The Conservative Leader in the Canadian Parliament, speaking on the 1st March, 1902, said that he did not believe in dealing with the question of Canadian defence by adopting a preferential tariff which would shut up the mills in Canada, and give increased profits to some manufacturers in Yorkshire. That was not, the speaker said, the way to contribute to the defence of the Empire.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said that the Manitoba Legislature had passed a Resolution the other day in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said of course the farmers in the North-West of Canada were perfectly willing that we should impose a preferential tariff of 2s. per quarter on wheat in their favour, but the question was—would the Canadian manufacturers lower their tariff? He challenged the hon. Member to quote a single responsible Canadian statesman who proposed to abolish, or to reduce, the present tariff on British goods in return for any preference we might give to their wheat. He agreed with the hon. Member who had said that there was a great deal of suffering in this country, and we had got to do something to meet it. No Liberal Member denied that. The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose affirmed the principle that we looked to meet that suffering by social reform. The hon. Member for Tunbridge Division, in his straightforward speech, had said that we must try to do away with fluctuations in employment; but the fluctuations in employment were greater in protectionist countries than here. He himself had been perfectly appalled at the evidence which was given before a Royal Commission on which he had sat, as to the time when the efficiency of workmen came to an end. It was a perfectly horrifying reflection to him that at the time of life when professional men in London, and in the great towns, were at the height of their intellectual vigour and skill, the artisan was done with. We had to meet a situation of that kind, but it could not be done by taxing the food of the poor man. Take this celebrated Tariff Commission. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham would not put a workman on that Commission, because he could not afford to pay the expense. [Cries of "No, no!"] Was it wrong for him to quote the reason given by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham? He was not criticising it. [An Hon. Member: Want of time.] Want of time! If that was the case in regard to workmen, what about the considerable proportion of the community who did not know what would be the effect of these tariffs. They had no trades unions to protect their interests, and could only look to Parliament to see that in any fiscal changes their condition should not be aggravated. What was wanted was to prolong the days of human efficiency in this country, and something might be done in that direction by taking away the temptations to drink. £180,000,000 a year was spent in drink, and yet this Government while talking about protecting the working classes, actually proposed to introduce a Bill to reduce the protection which the working classes already had against drink. He was glad that the controversy had been raised as it had called attention to the position of the people. All they wanted was that instead of resorting to quack remedies they should do something to protect the people against the greed of those great capitalists.

Sir GILBERT PARKER said he was very glad to have an opportunity of saying a few words on the question which had been raised by the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken. The hon. Gentleman challenged what he himself knew to be a fact, namely, the opinion of

Ministers of the Crown in Canada and of leading politicians of the Conservative Party in Canada with reference to preferential trade and reduced taxation on British goods. He was very glad to observe that the hon. Gentleman applied to tariffs on goods a different interpretation to that usually held by those who opposed the views of hon. Members on that side of the House. He said that Lancashire people had to pay taxation amounting to £200,000 in order to get their goods into Canada. If that was the case it was not the consumer but the Lancashire manufacturer who paid the tax.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that that was not what he stated.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said he merely mentioned the point to show the character of the statements which came from those who were preaching the doctrine of absolute free trade which did not exist. With reference to the opinion of leaders of political thought in Canada, he would challenge the hon. Gentleman as to whether for the last twenty years both Parties in Canada had not been in favour of preferential treatment in the British market, and had shown their adherence to that principle of preference by offering this country preference in their own markets on manufactured goods. They were told that it did not amount to much, and perhaps 33⅓ per cent. was not a very great deal, but he wished to point out that in 1893 the Canadian House of Commons passed a Resolution in favour of preference with this country, and when that Resolution was referred to the British House of Commons no less distinguished a Gentleman than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol said—

> "I confess that, speaking for myself, I would go a long way if I could secure a Zollverein between the Colonies and the United Kingdom and some common tariff applicable to them all."

Again and again on public platforms in Canada the leaders of what was called the Conservative Party in that country had supported the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. More than that they had heard to-night about the conference in Montreal and the resolution which was passed at it. It surprised him that the hon. Gentleman who brought up that matter found occasion to oppose the idea of preference in this House, since he helped to draw up the Montreal resolution which approved of the principle of preference. He would ask the House if they thoroughly understood the position taken up by the Colonies in this matter. He thought it was not an unreasonable position. They offered preference, but was this country to give nothing in return? He believed that there was no Legislature in the Colonies that was not prepared, according to their situation and to the tariffs which they adopted for their own needs, to give consideration to British goods. That consideration would naturally be in proportion to their opportunities. It would not be of course, as had been suggested, the taking off of all taxation on British goods. That would be an unreasonable suggestion. What they offered was a fair exchange and a greater reduction on British goods than they gave to any other country.

MR. GUEST (Plymouth) asked if the Colonies had offered a reduction.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said that Canada had offered a reduction of 33⅓ per cent., but they could not expect the Colonies to make a general offer until the principle of preference had been adopted by this country. The Colonies had accepted the principle of preference. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, speaking at the Montreal banquet, said he believed that the principle of preference would be of benefit to Canada, but that they did not wish to press their views on their brethren in Great Britain, and would wait until they had decided what course they would pursue. Surely it was reasonable that Canada, having accepted the principle of preference, should ask this country what course it intended to pursue. He would venture to put this point to the House. This country was taking every year from the United States about 50,000,000 cwts. of corn. The quantity was growing less every year, as the United States was producing less corn in proportion to its population than it produced ten years ago, and it was absolutely certain that, in a few years, this country would have to pay more for its corn whether it liked it or not. It would have to widen the area of supply, and was it not reasonable that it should look to those fields which were within the Empire for securing the corn it required. A 2s. duty on corn would mean that in time of peace and in time of war the food supply of this country was secured.

They had been told by the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken that this question had been sprung on the country in, so to speak, a night. He did not think that was entirely due to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, because before the right hon. Gentleman spoke there were indications that popular opinion was being roused in connection with this matter. Only a few years ago Lord Rosebery, in a speech which was reported in the palladium of the Liberal Party, the *Daily News*, drew attention to the matter. He devoted a great deal of time to showing that there was a distinct decline in British trade, and the remedy he found was technical education, throwing the blame for the decline of trade on the uneducated British working man and the unenterprising British manufacturer. He did not believe that the public in this country quite believed that all their difficulties arose from a lack of technical skill. Sir William Ramsay at Bradford had something to say on this question. He said that it was not by technical skill alone that Germany was successful, but also because she applied a scientific tariff in order to protect and develop her trade and enable her to invade the British market. Germany admitted British manufactured goods of all kinds, especially partly manufactured goods, and applied to them technical skill, returning them when completed to the very district where they were partly manufactured. When it was stated that protection only meant high tariffs put on without consideration of any of the circumstances, it showed that the question was not thoroughly understood. Germany applied to her industries the same scientific industry that she applied to her Army, that this country applied to its Navy, and that this country should also apply to its Army. Germany applied that technical skill which this country first taught her, and which came from educated working men. Now, however, it seemed to him that the apprentice was steadily taking possession of his master's business. He did not think it was a matter of congratulation that this country imported £90,000,000 of manufactured goods from foreign countries, at least half of which could be manufactured at home. Was it reasonable that all silks should be admitted free into this country to the detriment of the home silk manufacturers. 200,000,000 cwts. of flour was imported every year. Could not that be manufactured in this country? In such circumstances they ought to consider whether the decline of British trade was not due to something else than the mere competition of other countries. He believed the time had come for reconsidering the position. At present this country sold to the Colonies goods to the value of £109,000,000, and to foreign countries goods to the value of £140,000,000. If the Colonies bought of this country £1 worth of goods for every £1 this country bought of them, would not that be worth considering? The Colonies were young nations, vigorous, productive, and with immense resources, and they would be a source of strength to this country as the competition of other nations became keener, as the invasion of the home market became greater, and as the struggle of the nations enlarged. For himself, he believed that the secret of the future lay in the development of the resources of those young countries. If he were asked if they were to sacrifice anything for the Colonies he would say no, because the struggle of the British workman was great enough already, and the struggle of home industries was great enough. But the Colonies asked nothing for which they were not prepared to give a *quid pro quo*. They were willing to give this country the corn it needed, and to purchase from this country goods which they now obtained from other countries. They had been challenged on the position they had taken up on the question of tariff reform. He himself could not pretend to any sort of belief that the principle of retaliation was in itself sufficient, for he did not believe they could have effective retaliation unless it sprung from a system of tariffs. How great the tariffs were to be was, however, another question. He did not believe that the people of this country would ever adopt a tariff system like that of the United States. When they were challenged about the success of protective systems in other countries, he thought they were standing upon safe ground. They were challenged about wages, but wages in the United States were double what they were in this country. It seemed to him that he would have the support of the Irish Members, because Irish tobacco was now to receive a bounty, and that was an accptance of the principle of protection. Would anyone deny that the wages of the workmen in Germany had advanced proportionately greater than the wages of the working men in England? During the years 1887 to 1900 wages in England had advanced from 81 to 100 per cent., whereas wages in Germany had advanced from 78 to 100 per cent. That was an important matter, as they had been challenged again and again on the question of wages.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at one minute after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 11th February, 1904.

EARLDOM OF NORFOLK.

Petition of Charles Botolph Joseph Lord Mowbray, Lord Segrave, and Baron and Lord Stourton of Stourton in the county of Wiltshire, praying for leave to lodge a supplementary case; read, and ordered as prayed.

LE POWER AND COROGHMORE BARONY.

Petition of Edmond de le Poer of Gurteen le Poer, in the county of Waterford, Esquire (claiming to be Baron of Le Power and Coroghmore in the Peerage of Ireland), to His Majesty, praying that His Majesty may be graciously pleased to give directions to the Attorney-General in Ireland to investigate the Petitioner's pedigree and his right to the succession to the dignity and honour of Baron of Le Power and Coroghmore in the Peerage of Ireland; and also as to the outlawry against John Power in or about the year 1691, in order that the same may be reversed if found to affect the Petitioner; and, if not, that then the Petitioner may be admitted to the full enjoyment of the ancient dignity and honour of his ancestors as Baron Le Power and Coroghmore, with all the rights, privileges, and immunities thereunto belonging, or to make such other order in the premises as in His Majesty's wisdom may be deemed expedient, together with His Majesty's reference thereof to this House, and the report of the Attorney-General thereon, thereunto annexed.

Presented [by Command], read, and referred to the Committee for Privileges to consider and report.

NEW PEER.

The Lord Romilly took the Oath.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Wynford sat first in Parliament after the death of his kinsman.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Elysée Palace Hotel Company Bill [H.L.]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [H.L.]; referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ROLL OF THE LORDS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had prepared and laid it on the Table. The same was ordered to be printed. (No. 7.)

AFRICA, No. 1 (1904).

Correspondence and Report from His Majesty's Consul at Boma respecting the administration of the Independent State of the Congo.

TRANSVAAL (LABOUR COMMISSION).

I. Reports of the Transvaal Labour Commission.

II. Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Returns of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies in the United Kingdom during the nine months ended 30th September, 1903, in pursuance of the Regulation of Railways Act (1871); together with reports of the inspecting officers, assistant inspecting officers, and sub-inspectors of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade, upon certain accidents which were inquired into.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

I. Orders made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, authorising the construction of light railways in: the borough of Maidstone, in the county of Kent; the parishes of Acton, Edgware, Edmonton, Enfield, Finchley, Friern Barnet, Hendon, Hornsey, Little Stanmore, Southgate, Tottenham, Wembley, Willesden, and Wood Green, in the county of Middlesex; the parish of Watford Urban and the urban district of

Watford, in the county of Hertford; the urban districts of Quarry Bank, Brierley Hill, and Rowley Regis, in the county of Stafford.

II. An Order made by the Light Railway Commissioners, and confirmed by the Board of Trade, amending the Robertsbridge and Pevensey Light Railway Order, 1900.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

COMMITTALS (IRELAND).

Returns from the Clerks of the Crown and Peace of the number of persons committed for trial in 1903.

SUMMARY PROCEEDINGS (ENGLAND).

Rule, dated 30th December, 1903, made by the Lord Chancellor under Section 29 of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, as to the taking of recognisances by the governor of a prison.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION ACT, 1888.

Order, made by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries under the provisions of the Act, for the variation of the Order creating the Southern Sea Fisheries District.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 4th February, 1904, declaring that Charles Dyer, Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield, was appointed without a civil service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his Department.

DUCHY OF CORNWALL.

An account of the receipts and disbursements of the Duchy of Cornwall in the year ended the 31st December, 1903.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS, 1853 TO 1891 (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Licence granted by His Majesty to Florence Elizabeth Maybrick, under the provisions of the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891, to which is annexed a condition other than those contained in Schedule A of the Penal Servitude Act, 1864.

POOR PRISONERS' DEFENCE ACT, 1903 (DRAFT RULES).

Draft rules proposed to be made by the Attorney-General, with the approval of the Lord Chancellor and the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 2 of the Act.

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP).

General rules made pursuant to the Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890, and the Judicature Act, 1881.

PILOTAGE.

Abstract of returns relating to pilots and pilotage in the United Kingdom (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 312, of session of 1902), as furnished by the various pilotage authorities.

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES.

Statements of accounts and of life assurance and annuity business and abstracts of actuarial reports deposited with the Board of Trade, under Section 10 of the Life Assurance Companies Act, 1870, during the year ended 31st December, 1903.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

BANK OF ENGLAND.

Applications made by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England for advances to Government authorised by Parliament, from 5th January, 1903, to 5th January, 1094; delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

BIRMINGHAM BISHOPRIC.

Petition in favour of legislation for the creation of a new See of Birmingham; of the President and Members of the Worcester Diocesan Conference; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to enable women to be elected and act as members of county and borough councils and metropolitan borough councils was presented by the Earl Beauchamp; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 8.)

CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH—who had given notice "To ask His Majesty's Government (1) what obstacles exist in the way of a very considerable emigration into the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies of unskilled labourers from the United Kingdom, such as would suffice to develop all local industries; (2) whether the Transvaal and Orange River Colonies, which are under the direct supervision of the Colonial Office, do not impose tariffs upon the importation of foodstuffs, or permit rates having a similar effect upon railways under Government control; (3) what are the tariffs and what are the rates upon foodstuffs"—said: My Lords, two Blue-books and a White Paper have been issued dealing with this subject. I shall, however, make but very little reference to them, because, as it seems to me, they are presented to us in a somewhat imperfect form. In the Blue-book on the Further Correspondence relating to the Affairs of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony there is a long string of despatches from Lord Milner to the Colonial Secretary, but those despatches are not given to us *in extenso.* We have extracts from them, and I do complain that we are not in an adequate position to consider the question, for we do not really know what Lord Milner's views in full are. Let me illustrate my point. Despatch No. 91 is a most important despatch. It is the despatch in which Lord Milner first urges the Colonial Secretary to agree to the dropping of the instalment, but we are not given that despatch in full. Then, again, in Despatch No. 115 we find these somewhat significant words—

> "We do not look to Indian labour for the mines."

In the interview between Lord Milner and the deputation of the White League in June last, Lord Milner clearly alluded to the possibility of employing Indian labour; but in this Despatch No. 115, which is only presented to us in a fragmentary form, we find the phrase which I have just quoted. I should very much like to know what communications have passed between the Indian Government and Lord Milner relative to employing Indian labour, and I should like to see that correspondence laid upon the Table. If you glance through these important despatches from Lord Milner to the Colonial Secretary, you will find that the same thing applies to Despatches Nos. 117, 127, and others. We are not given the whole despatch, but have to rely for our judgment upon extracts. That is certainly a most unusual form in which to present despatches and communications of this important character to Parliament. My noble friend Lord Ripon will remember that in 1864 Lord Robert Cecil, who was then in Opposition, censured Mr. Low for publishing what he described as garbled reports of the inspectors of schools. Mr. Low, as was his wont, somewhat caustically replied that it was necessary that the inspectors should keep their observations within bounds for the sake of public economy, but that if the House of Commons thought fit the reports should be printed in full whatever they might cost. However, my Lords, even this did not satisfy the House of Commons of that day, and a vote of censure was passed upon Mr. Low, who resigned, and his place was taken by Mr. Bruce, the father of my noble friend Lord Aberdare. I think those of us who object to this proposal to introduce Chinese labour are entitled to see these important despatches in full.

As regards the second Blue-book, containing Reports of the Transvaal Labour Commission, I contend, with all deference, that the Majority Report is of no value to us unless we have the opportunity, which we have not had, of studying the evidence that was given before that Commission. My noble friend opposite points to an enormous book, of which I believe there are only two volumes in the House of Lords. It is absurd to suppose that we can study evidence of that kind in two or three days. It was well known—it was a matter almost of common knowledge—that the majority of the Labour Commission were practically pledged on the subject before they were appointed—not pledged formally, but their opinion was known to be in favour of some outside labour from abroad. Therefore we cannot form an opinion of any value upon the Labour Commission's Report unless we have the opportunity of studying the evidence. The same argument, it seems to me, applies to the Legislative Council, whcih originally passed the Ordinance.

That Council is under Lord Milner, is appointed by him, and his views upon this subject are well known. It cannot therefore be supposed that anything coming from the Legislative Council gives to us a very independent view, or that it has any title to support on that ground. However, as I have said, I shall not deal with what we can extract from the Blue-books.

Fortunately we have facts quite apart from the Blue-books which throw a lurid light upon the policy in South Africa which has culminated in this proposal to employ servile Chinese labour with a view of excluding free British labour. Barely two years have elapsed since the close of the Transvaal War—a war which, while it brought sorrow, anxiety, and suffering into every home, was ennobled by the common spirit of self-sacrifice both of rich and poor, and which we were told was waged with no sordid object, but to equalise the rights of white men and to release the native races from the slavery in which they were held by the Boers. But since that war we have learned a good deal; we have made a good many discoveries. Lord Milner has taught us the new political science that we can equalise the rights of white men by levelling down as well as by levelling up. In place of the old Volksraad, which, after all, did represent a certain portion of the white community, we have a Legislative Council, under Lord Milner, which is absolutely irresponsible to any of the inhabitants of the colony. I hear it suggested that we ought to have a referendum, but I do not suppose the Government will offer it, and even if they did, I do not think, in the present condition of things in the Transvaal, it would lead to a very satisfactory or a very honest result. I am reminded of the sort of plebiscites which were held during the declining years of the Second Empire. No, my Lords, it seems to me that so long as the Transvaal remains a Crown Colony we in this House and the people in this country have a right to decide questions of principle like this. If we want to find an explanation why there is to be no British labour in the Transvaal, and why an English Colony must submit to the very serious and dangerous introduction of Chinese labour, we must look to political and other considerations which, in spite of many contradictions, have remained the permanent policy of Lord Milner's administration. I suppose I shall be told by the Government that, after all, the reason why British labour is excluded and Chinese labour introduced, is purely a financial one. In reply to that plea, I would call your Lordship's attention to language employed by Lord Milner in his reply to a deputation from the White League in June, 1903. What did Lord Milner, on that occasion, say? Addressing the deputation, he said—

> "I cannot make out what you think the policy of the mine-owners is. You assert that they want to work out the mines at an excessive pace, but at the same time you affirm that they are rendering white labour impossible, and that they are not making the least endeavour to get natives."

Mr. Hay replied—

> "They think they will be able to pay higher dividends once they get Chinese labour; hence this policy."

To which Lord Milner retorted—

> "I differ from you in thinking that Chinese labour will be cheaper."

Then, again, are we to be told that the colony is confronted by financial ruin, and that on that account this importation of Chinese labour is rendered necessary and imperative? Again, I would call your Lordships' attention to language used by Lord Milner. Speaking in June last, he said—

> "It is an unfortunate circumstance that so many people seem unable to discuss this question of fact in a temperate manner, but become partisans, so to speak, of a particular solution, and, while exaggerating everything that makes in favour of that solution, decline to see the plainest arguments on the other side. To listen to some extreme advocates of Asiatic labour you would think that this place was on the verge of total ruin. What is really the case? The production of gold even now is greater than in 1895 or 1896, when the Transvaal already was, and had been for some time, the marvel of the world in the matter of gold production. The world progresses, no doubt, but what was fabulous wealth seven years ago is not abject poverty to-day. Not only that, but the rate of production is steadily increasing."

I do not understand how Lord Milner could use that language in June, and use totally different language barely a few months afterwards. If I am told, as I suppose I shall be told by His Majesty's Government, that Lord Milner has changed his mind, I again say that that emphasises and strengthens my claim that we should have fuller information than we have at present. If Lord Milner has altered his mind during these few months, it stands to reason that we cannot be expected to accept his authority as unimpeachable or infallible. We ought to have the full and complete evidence before us which induced him so completely to change his mind on this subject. The financial argument is, I believe, a false and fictitious one. The conduct of the owners is the real cause. The owners of the mines give an insufficient wage, and they treat their men badly. I am not making these statements, as I shall attempt to show, without corroborative evidence. The consulting engineer of the Consolidated Goldfields estimated that the increase of dividends to result from reducing Kaffir wages would be nearly £2,500,000 on the Rand mines per annum. This was a suggestion that was promptly put into action. In the second year of the war there was a conference of mining representatives at Cape Town, when it was resolved that on the opening of the mines the Kaffir wages should be reduced 33 per cent. It is not likely that, in view of this arbitrary reduction of wages, the colony would be specially attractive to free British labour. But, apart from that, the Kaffirs were not, and are not, well treated in the Rand mines. Sir Godfrey Lagden, whose authority, I think, we may accept because he is our Commissioner for Native Affairs in the Transvaal, gives in his return before the Commission the rate of mortality in the De Beers Mines as 30 per 1,000 per annum, but in the Rand mines the rate of mortality is 70 per 1,000 per annum. I will also give you a quotation from two speeches of certainly very impartial people. Dr. Jameson, speaking at Cape Town in November, 1903, is reported in *The Times* to have said—

> "The De Beers Company would never employ Chinamen; they had plenty of labour, white and black, because they treated their people well."

Sir Lewis Mitchell, speaking at the annual meeting of the De Beers Company, held at Kimberley on 16th November, 1903, said—and his words are very significant—

> "Some statistics have appeared showing the mortality in the Rand mines. I find that the mortality in the Rand was 70 per 1,000, while ours was 30 per 1,000. We attach a great deal of importance to that. We believe the native question is not one entirely of wages. It is a question of treatment and of care. The natives are but men. They are men, not machines. If we study their interests I feel sure when we want more labour we can always get it."

Besides all this, there have been, and are, political motives at work. In the Memorandum on the Mining Industry which the mine-owners presented to Mr Chamberlain on the occasion of his visit to Johannesburg in January, 1902, there was a reference to that "trail of the serpent"—the formation of labour unions. I will read a letter from a gentleman whom I know—a very shrewd man—which throws a clear light upon this question. It is from Mr. Percy Tarbutt to Mr. Creswell, written from St. Swithin's Lane, and it appears on page 171 of the Blue-book. It is as follows—

> "Dear Mr. Creswell,—With reference to your trial of white labour for surface work on the mines, I have consulted the Consolidated Goldfields people, and one of the members of the Board of the Village Main Reef has consulted Messrs. Werner, Beit & Co., and the feeling seems to be one of fear that, having a large number of white men employed on the Rand in the position of labourers, the same troubles will arise as are now prevalent in the Australian Colonies, viz., that the combination of the labour classes will become so strong as to be able, more or less, to dictate not only on the question of wages, but also on political questions by the power of their votes when a representative Government is established."

Not only are these the views of responsible people like Mr. Percy Tarbutt, but they are echoed—perhaps not so clearly, but they are echoed—by Lord Milner himself. For what other meaning can you attach to this? Lord Milner, in his speech in replying to the deputation of the White League alluded to in the Blue-book, used this language—

> "Indeed, it is not merely a question of Asiatics. Constituted as we are we cannot admit an indiscriminate influx of people of a class which the country is unable to digest, whether from Asia or from anywhere else."

It does seem to me quite clear from this evidence and from these facts, that the policy of Lord Milner and of the Government is to exclude from the Colony British labour. On the other hand, I maintain that those who advocate the employment of Chinese labour have to prove not only that every obstacle has been removed, but that every possible inducement has been offered to make the Transvaal British, not only in name, but in fact. The Transvaal was won by British blood. We now know that it is to be paid for entirely out of the taxation of the British people, and we have at the present moment this extraordinary bargain—that while the gold magnates have the gold we are to be left with the exclusive possession of the taxes.

Last, but by no means least, there is a feeling of the deepest repugnance among great masses of our fellow countrymen to this introduction of Chinese labour. Lord Milner, with incomparable taste, chose on one occasion to refer to this feeling of aversion as "the Exeter Hall view," which is always sentimental and always ignorant on native questions. I share with my right rev. friend the Bishop of Worcester some doubt as to what is meant by that epithet "sentimental." I am told by those who have great experience of Asiatics and of their habits that to herd masses of Chinese together in enclosures is productive of moral and social horrors upon which I have no intention to dwell this evening. No one, I think, can accuse *The Times* newspaper of indulging in sentimentality on this question. An article appeared in that newspaper in January in support of the draft Ordinance. That, of course, we expected, but we did not expect *The Times* to be so candid as to say—

> "It must be admitted that the lot of the Chinese labourer does not promise to be very gay or very happy from our point of view."

The Times mining correspondent went on to describe these indentured labourers as "muscular machinery." That may be a very picturesque phrase, but I believe it to be a very accurate description of what these Chinese labourers will be. I must say I feel from my heart that this language is also the language of degradation. It implies, I do not think I will say the lowering, but the complete abandonment of every great ideal which has hitherto controlled the relations in this Empire between the governors and the governed. I have no right to expect that, to those whose religion is based upon German philosophy, the Christian tradition can speak with any extraordinary sanction; but there are others—a large and powerful class, who are, I think, sometimes unwisely overlooked by politicians—to whom the Gospel still speaks as a living force. and they feel, and feel deeply, that to use the Chinese or any other subject race as "muscular machinery," as mere machines for our own advantage, is condemned by what is to them the most supreme and the highest law of God. They may appear to the Government to be old-fashioned and out-of-date, but they still cling, and cling with pride and determination, to the greatest and noblest of English traditions—that in all parts of the British Empire, wherever the direct control of Imperial officials is set up, there the people are to be governed for their own good and not exploited for the benefit of our commerce. I am aware that there have been individuals as well as classes who have been content so to use the native races, but I trust and believe that the Christian conscience—and by Christian conscience I speak of what is to me the highest conscience of the country—is sufficiently strong and powerful to put a stop to such a transaction. I beg to put the Question which stands in my name.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON—who had given notice "To call attention to the further correspondence relating to the affairs of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony recently presented, with special reference to the question of the employment of Chinese labour in the Transvaal; and to move for Papers"—said: My Lords, my noble friend who has just sat down has, to a considerable extent, covered the ground of the whole question which I was desirous of raising on this occasion. I do not in the least desire to go over again, so far as I can avoid doing so, the matters with which he has so ably dealt, but I presume it will be for the convenience of the House if I at once proceed with the observations which I was desirous of offering to your Lordships on this subject. The Blue-book contains what I am bound to regard as very disagreeable reading. It shows a very unpleasant state of things to exist at the present moment in the Transvaal—a state of things highly unsatisfactory in financial and, I think I might say, in all other respects. But I do not wish to occupy your Lordships' time by entering upon all the questions which are raised by this Blue-book in one or other of its parts. I shall therefore confine my observations to the question of the proposed employment of indentured Chinese labour in the Transvaal—a question of sufficient importance in itself. This is a subject which requires and demands the consideration of this House and of the other House of Parliament, because there are involved in it matters of so great weight and importance that they ought not to be, and I will venture to say they cannot be, passed over in silence and with indifference.

The Ordinance contained in the Blue-book—the Ordinance for the purpose of establishing a system of Chinese labour under novel and strange conditions—is one which is without any precedent in any part of the King's dominions. I do not make that statement upon my own authority, I make it upon the authority of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The right hon. Gentleman was asked in the other House last night by my friend Mr. Buchanan whether there were any mines in the British Empire worked by indentured foreign labour under conditions similar to those proposed in the Transvaal Ordinance, and Mr. Lyttelton replied, "No, Sir." That was a sufficiently emphatic answer, and I am entitled to say from that statement and from my own knowledge that the system proposed in this Ordinance is without any precedent in any part of His Majesty's dominions. We have, in various parts of our dominions, systems regulating the employment of indentured coolies, but none of them contain such conditions as are set forth in the Ordinance now before your Lordships.

I am not surprised that the conditions of this Ordinance should be remarkable, for there is throughout all English-speaking peoples in every part of the world the strongest objection to admitting Chinese labour into their country. There is a very interesting Paper in one of the Blue-books, containing a report as to the measures taken in various parts of British and American dominions for the purpose of regulating, and, as far as possible, preventing, the introduction of Chinese labour; and it is very natural that those who wish to introduce it into the Transvaal should regard themselves bound to devise some methods which would secure that there should not be competition between the imported Chinese labourers, when their period of work was over, and the ordinary shopkeepers and small traders of the country. They are, as is universally known, very dangerous competitors for persons of that kind, I have seen it myself, in my experience, particularly in Burmah, where the Chinese, by their superiority in certain respects, were constantly driving out their competitors of the intelligent Burmese race. Therefore, those who desired Chinese labour were compelled to devise some system under which it could be introduced into the Transvaal, and yet by which they could prevent, as far as was possible, any one of these persons so brought in being able to at any time leave his employment and turn to other and more profitable undertakings.

That, my Lords, is the basis and history of these special regulations. You dare not bring Chinese labour into the Transvaal or into any other British colony unless you tie it down with these restrictions and prevent the Chinese from entering into competition of the kind I have referred to. These labourers, when brought into the Transvaal, are at once to be shut up in compounds. They are to be confined and crowded together within the limits of those compounds, and are not to be allowed to leave for any reason, except with a permit from their employer which may entitle them to be absent for a space of forty-eight hours. Many of the larger mines will, I imagine, require as many as 1,000—or possibly more—I have heard it put as high as 3,000, and these Chinese labourers are to be confined within the limits of what is called in the Ordinance their premises. They are there to be shut up at an employment in which, according to the statement of my noble friend behind me, the death-rate is 70 per cent., and under conditions which I believe to be contrary alike to justice and to morality.

Allusion has been made to the right rev. Prelate the Bishop of Worcester. The right rev. Prelate a few days ago addressed a very admirable letter, which does him the highest honour, to *The Times* newspaper. That letter has had its effect, because I understand it produced last night a statement of high importance from the Colonial Secretary. I will explain why I am in a little doubt on this point. I saw a report as to the Colonial Secretary's statement in an evening paper last night, and I took up the newspapers this morning, in which a fuller report was to be expected, to see whether they confirmed it. I found, when I looked at *The Times*, that it was not touched upon at all. There was no mention whatever of it in *The Times*. I therefore began to doubt whether the evening paper was correct. I next looked at the *Standard*, and in that paper I found a full confirmation of the report I had seen in the evening paper. The Colonial Secretary was asked by Mr. Herbert Samuel whether, before sanction was given to the Transvaal Imported Labour Ordinance, the right hon. Gentleman would secure that regulations should be made assuring to all Chinese labourers who might be recruited for the Transvaal mines, the right to be accompanied by their wives and children, if they so desired, on terms similar to those that would apply to the labourers themselves. To that Question Mr. Lyttelton replied—

> "I have already stated that it is my intention to take precautions that all reasonable facilities shall be given for the introduction of the families of labourers, and the regulations will be framed with the object of giving effect to that intention. I am unable, however, to give the pledge which the right hon. Gentleman desires, as the preparation of the regulations will occupy considerable time."

That is to say, Mr. Lyttelton was unable to promise that he would not give his sanction to the Ordinance before that matter was settled. That Mr. Lyttelton should have been moved by such a letter as that of the Bishop of Worcester is most natural, and thoroughly in accordance with all that we know of his high character; and I earnestly appeal to His Majesty's Government not to give their consent to this Ordinance until these regulations have been made. So long as you can say to the mine-owners in South Africa "unless you take these precautions we will not consent to your Ordinance" you have precisely that little pistol of which my noble friend the Foreign Secretary is so fond in diplomacy, and you can bring your negotiations with the mine-owners to a successful issue. But once confirm this Ordinance and put it out of your hands, and you will find it not so easy to deal with them in a matter which, if it be settled, as it ought to be settled as a matter of common decency, will entail upon the mine-owners a very large amount of expenditure. If they are to bring, not only the labourers, but their wives and children from China, the expenditure which will fall upon them will be great, and, therefore, I do earnestly appeal to the Government to have these regulations settled before giving their final consent to the Ordinance.

This system which it is proposed to establish is one of semi-slavery. There is no other term to be applied to it. I am afraid I shall incur the censure of Lord Milner for having made that statement. He will think me a most sentimental person. But at least I can say this, that I have never attended a meeting at Exeter Hall in my life, and, therefore, I am not open to the charge of being connected with that celebrated institution. It is not pure slavery, because it is preceded by what is supposed to be consent on the part of the parties who are to be emigrated, but, once they are in South Africa, if they are not slaves, at least they are prisoners, for they are not to be allowed out except under stringent regulations and with a possibility of being arrested at every turn. I should like to have some information from the noble Duke the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies as to what steps are being taken, or are about to be taken, for the purpose of securing that the conditions under which these men are to serve are explained fully to them before they leave China. I know they are to make contracts when they get to South Africa, and that arrangements are to be made there for the explanation of the contracts to the labourers, but how are they going to be explained to them before they leave China? Once conveyed from China to the Transvaal the labourer has very little option but to sign anything that is put before him; but it might be possible, if precautions were taken, to have the terms of the contract explained to him in China, that he might be able to exercise his judgment to a certain extent. I do not press that point far, because we know that recruiters of any kind are not very scrupulous persons, and that they are likely to paint very fine pictures to those whom they are about to engage; but, nevertheless, it would be a satisfaction if the noble Duke could state that proper arrangements are about to be made to secure, as far as possible, that these conditions are explained to the men before they leave China.

The arrangements proposed are, to my mind, highly unsatisfactory and unworthy of the character of this country, for they involve great privations and exposure to conditions and restrictions which render the labourers what my noble friend behind me called "muscular machines." It must be remembered that, if you crowd vast masses of people together into a very small space, you expose them, no matter what regulations you make, to highly insanitary conditions, and these insanitary conditions will increase as time goes on, for if you dump these men down in a small space, they will foul the country.

I pass from that to another consideration which has been largely touched upon by my noble friend who preceded me—I mean the tendency that any arrangement of this kind will have to exclude British unskilled labour from the Transvaal. It used to be constantly said by the late Mr. Cecil Rhodes that one of the great objects of his policy, whether in Rhodesia or in the Transvaal, was to open new fields of employment for British labour. Mr. Rhodes is dead, and those who were his followers and supporters have indeed abandoned his policy. Now, forsooth, it is found to be full of political and industrial danger that the labouring people of this country should be freely admitted to work in the Transvaal. I will not go over again the references upon this subject which have been already submitted to your Lordships—I thank my noble friend for having spared me a good deal of trouble in that direction—but there can be no question that Mr. Percy Tarbutt's letter which has been read by my noble friend is most convincing proof of the truth of that statement. Mr. Percy Tarbutt has been, and, I think still is, a director of some of these companies. He deliberately made that statement. In the debate Sir George Farrar referred to the statement, but did not deny it—he offered no denial whatever to the statement of the opinion held by Messrs. Werner, Beit & Co., as to the introduction of British labour. I do not think that is likely to commend itself to the people of this country. I think, as my noble friend has said, that if you had told them before the Transvaal war began that the ultimate result would be that they would be shut out of industrial employment in the Transvaal they would have taken a very different view of your policy.

Passing from that, I will refer in a few words to the effect of these proposals in His Majesty's other colonies. You have in this Blue-book protests from New Zealand and from Australia against the employment of Chinese. We know the difficulties that they have had in the matter, and the dangers to which those difficulties have at times exposed them. We know, as I have said, the dread of the employment of Chinese which is to be found wherever the British tongue is spoken. It is not unnatural, therefore, that the Australasian Colonies should enter a protest against these proceedings, but I do not desire to put that point too high. I will merely say that their views, which are the results of their experience, ought to be weighed with the utmost consideration by His Majesty's Government, and that their wishes in this matter are entitled to the highest respect. I do not, of course, say that Australia and New Zealand could decide this question. I admit at once that they lie too far from South Africa. Their protest, however, ought to be considered, and is a strong reason for not taking this step unless it is absolutely necessary. But the case of the Cape is very different. The Cape is the neighbour of the Transvaal and is the greatest of our South African Colonies. The Cape has a long-standing tradition upon this subject and has entered its protest. What does the Cape say? I have here the Resolution of the Cape House of Assembly, and it is to this effect—

> "That this House, taking cognisance of the resolution passed at the recent conference held at Bloemfontein on the subject of the qualified approval of the importation of Asiatic labour, desires to express its strong opposition to any such importation as prejudicial to the interests of all classes of the people in South Africa."

That is the view, my Lords, of the Cape House of Assembly, arrived at after the

Bloemfontein Conference, and their resolution was followed by a Minute of the Cape Ministers, dated 17th August last year, containing various objections to this proposal. The third of those objections was as follows—

> "Thirdly, in relation to the policy of a British South African Federation which Ministers are most earnestly pursuing, they cannot but feel that the importation of Asiatics will greatly hamper its consummation, as it will induce a highly discordant element between the European natives, and it will certainly complicate, if not altogether prevent, the union of all the Colonies under a Central Administration."

That was backed by a letter from Sir Gordon Sprigg, who was not satisfied with his protest of August, but made another in January last, in which he said—

> "The Prime Minister requests that the Secretary of State for the Colonies may have his attention directed by cable to Minute of 17th August last relating to the proposal to import Asiatic labour into South Africa, and may be informed that the Prime Minister, who is charged with the whole administration of native affairs in this Colony, in which an enormous native population resides, desires to impress on the Imperial Government that nothing has occurred since that Minute was drafted to cause him to alter in the slightest degree the views therein expressed as regards the natives, and especially affecting the great question of federation."

I attach to those views of Cape Colony the greatest possible importance, and I consider them to be entitled to the greatest possible weight. As I have said, Cape Colony is a close neighbour of the Transvaal, but that is not the main reason why their view should be considered, though it is a strong one. The main reason is given in the statement of Sir Gordon Sprigg, as to the fatal effect which the adoption of this policy will have on the great question of federation. I venture to say that there is no man who has paid attention to South African affairs, or who understands the question even in an elementary degree, who will not admit at once that the true solution of the difficulties of South Africa lies in federation. The history of federation in that country has been most unfortunate. My noble and lamented friend, the late Lord Carnarvon, saw what was needed, saw it with an almost prophetic eye, but was, unhappily, too much in a hurry. He took steps to bring about that federation before affairs in South Africa were ripe and failed. Since then other attempts have been made, but not with success. Now a time has arrived when it is more desirable than it ever was before that there should be brought about a federation of these Colonies, if we are to restore peace, tranquillity, and good government to our South African dominions. The Cape Parliament, and, I think, all those who understand the subject, have declared that the importation of Asiatic labour will be more fatal to the success of a policy of confederation than any step that could possibly be taken. I know Lord Milner sneers at this. He says it is nothing but electioneering. That, of course, is what one Party is apt to say of another when an election is impending. We know what it is worth and how to discount it; but surely you could not have a clearer proof that these proposals are universally unpopular in Cape Colony than that neither Party will support them, but, on the other hand, resist them. You find Progressives and Bond alike agreeing to denounce and condemn them, and alike agreeing, as a necessary part of both political programmes, that they should be opposed.

Now, there is another point to which I should like to draw attention, and I am rather sorry that my noble friend the Foreign Secretary has left the House, as it concerns him. I confess I cannot conceive a more unfortunate moment than the present for taking this step and for going to the Chinese Government to negotiate arrangements for taking their people under the conditions of this Ordinance. There is a great war in the Far East, and it should be our object to avoid anything which could in the slightest degree be irritating to China at the present moment, and we know that arrangements with regard to matters of this kind are very apt to lead to prolonged difficulty and disputes. As I understand the position, China is bound by treaty not to resist fair and legitimate emigration of labour from China, but she has a right, also under treaty, to insist that regulations should be made with her for settling the terms upon which, and the manner in which, that emigration should be conducted. I think that to raise the questions which are likely to be raised by the negotiation of such regulations at the present moment will not help the noble Marquess the Foreign Secretary in the tremendous task which lies before him of doing the utmost that he can to prevent this unhappy war extending further. The noble Marquess has fair warning of what is expected of him, because *The Times* correspondent at Johannesburg in November last wrote—

> "Something more than a mere assent of the Imperial Government to the importation of Chinese will be looked for. To insure the success of the scheme, the active co-operation of His Majesty's representatives at Pekin will be necessary, in order that the Chinese authorities may feel that they are dealing officially with the British Government, and not only with the unofficial British community."

Therefore, if my noble friend, who I see has now returned, follows, I had almost said the mandate of *The Times* correspondent, he will certainly have his hands full of many thorny difficulties with the Chinese Government, and difficulties that it would be to the interests of this country he should, if possible, avoid.

That brings me to this question: Why is there this tremendous hurry about this matter? You cannot conclude it till you have settled with the Chinese. You cannot get the men out of China, consistently with your treaty, until those regulations are made. I conceive that in these circumstances there is no reason at all why His Majesty's Government should refuse to Parliament plenty of time for the consideration and discussion of this question. Mr. Lyttelton at first said that ample opportunity would be given to Parliament for the consideration and discussion of this question. Since then, for reasons unknown to me, he has drawn back from that declaration, and has said that he will not give anything beyond the period of the discussion on the Address; therefore, in another place this question is to be brought forward at the fag end of a long debate on the Address, covering a vast amount of ground, and at a time when it may be extinguished altogether by means of the closure. I do not think that this is a fulfilment of the pledge—the printed pledge—of Mr. Lyttelton upon this subject, and I say without hesitation that it appears to me that this attempt to burke discussion in Parliament is an indecent attempt. I see the most rev. Primate perusing a Blue-book of which there are only two copies in your Lordships' House. I certainly think it is wrong that so limited a number of copies—two for this House and four for the House of Commons—are supplied to Parliament.

Now, as to the alleged urgency, I have no doubt whatever that it is very desirable to settle this question as soon as possible, but I have some doubts whether the mine magnates in Pretoria are entitled to demand that settlement in the imperious manner in which they are demanding it. These difficulties about labour are very much their own fault. My noble friend behind me referred to the sudden drop in wages. It is utterly unreasonable to suppose that, having made that mistake in 1902, you are in two or three years afterwards to say that you are in such an intolerable position that the whole principle upon which Coolie immigration has been hitherto carried on is to be overthrown to provide labour for the mines. My noble friend read Sir Lewis Mitchell's statement, and showed that those who were connected with the De Beers' undertaking had stated that there was no difficulty in getting labour. It was all a question of good treatment and price. That also ought to be considered. At the same time I do not deny in the least that it is desirable this question should be settled. All I venture to submit is that it ought only to be settled upon just and sound principles, and I hold that the principles of this Ordinance are neither just nor sound.

I want to say one word upon a point which was made by the noble Earl the Leader of the Opposition during the debate the other night on the Address. My noble friend Lord Spencer spoke then of 100,000 Chinese labourers being required. The noble Marquess replied that that was a mistake and contrary to fact, and added that there were going to be 10,000 introduced at first, but that certainly 100,000 was quite beyond the mark. The Secretary of the Transvaal Chamber of Commerce in London has circulated a little pamphlet, which, no doubt, your Lordships have seen, in which he says—

> "The demand for native labour for the Transvaal mining industry is in excess of the present supply by about 129,000 men, and whilst no complete data as to the future

requirements of the whole industry are obtainable, it is estimated that the mines of the Witwatersrand will require within the next five years an additional supply" (that is, additional to the 129,000) "of 196,000 labourers."

Therefore my noble friend the Leader of the Opposition was not far wrong in the figure which he quoted the other evening. Now, how does the Government meet this question? They meet it by saying that they are going to treat the Transvaal Government as a self-governing colony. It is not a self-governing colony, but a Crown colony. They cannot, by choosing to say that it is a self-governing colony, or by treating it as such, make it a self-governing colony. I wish they could. And they cannot divest themselves of one single atom of responsibility for the whole of these proceedings by professing their desire to treat a Crown colony as if it were a self-governing colony.

It is a bad habit for a man to quote his own speeches, and it is not one to which I readily resort, but I hope your Lordships will pardon me if I venture to refer to the language I used in the year 1899 upon this question of the responsibility of the Home Government for Crown and self-governing colonies. My object at that time was to show that the responsibility of the Colonial Secretary for the administration, and even for the legislation of self-governing colonies, was very small; that he had no power in administration, and little real power inregard to legislation; and that it was most important that that fact should be understood by the country, who should not blame the King's Government at home for anything that they did not like in the conduct of self-governing colonies. I added—

"But in the case of Crown colonies and colonies administered by chartered companies, like the British South Africa Company, the difficulty does not exist. In those cases the Government at home has full power, and, therefore, it is right that it should have complete responsibility. It can order what it pleases and what it thinks right, and, having ordered it, it has the power of enforcing it."

I only give that quotation to show that when no such question as this was before us, and before even the late war actually broke out, I expressed in this House precisely the same views which I am expressing at the present moment, so that none of your Lordships can say I have brought forward this view for the purpose of this particular argument. The government existing at present in the Transvaal is purely a Crown colony government. The Secretary of State for the Colonies is absolutely and fully responsible for everything which that government does—responsible to Parliament, responsible to the people of this country, and it is no use trying to shift that responsibility by saying that the Government chose to treat a Crown colony as if it were a self-governing colony.

The Marquess of Ripon.

My noble friend opposite, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Leader of this House, gave some reasons for thinking that the opinion of the people of the Transvaal had been satisfactorily and sufficiently tested. I venture to say that there is only one way of really testing the opinion of any people, and that is through the medium, and by the means of, a freely-elected Legislature, guided by a Government responsible to that Legislature, and having its confidence. That is the English method of ascertaining public opinion. My noble friend spoke of plebiscites and referendums. I cannot say I am very fond of plebiscites. I am old enough to recollect certain plebiscites which were not generally considered to have produced satisfactory results, and I am bound to say I doubt whether a satisfactory result would have been produced by a method of that kind, particularly in the circumstances of the Transvaal. Then the noble Marquess the Foreign Secretary rested his case upon three grounds. I suppose he is of opinion that neither of them is quite conclusive, but that by lumping them together he may produce an impression that the proposal is supported by popular opinion. He referred first of all to the resolution of the Bloemfontein Conference. I will read that resolution to your Lordships. It is as follows—

"The Conference is of opinion that the permanent settlement in South Africa of Asiatic races would be injurious, and should not be permitted, but, if industrial development positively requires the introduction of unskilled labourers, under Government control, by which provision is made to indenture and repatriate them at the termination of their articles, it should be permissible."

A more grudging resolution I can hardly conceive. It may have been the result of a compromise, or the result of pressure.

It is anything but hearty. How was it met? It was instantly met by the House of Assembly at the Cape by the resolution which I have read to your Lordships. Therefore, I do not think that the Government are entitled to lay much stress upon the Bloemfontein Resolution.

Then there is the Labour Commission. The majority of that Commission were more or less the intimates of the mine-owners of the Transvaal, and their opinion is not, to my mind, conclusive. Then there is the Legislative Council. I venture to say that the opinion of a nominated Legislative Council cannot and ought not to be taken as the opinion of the people of the country. I am supported in that view by no less an authority than the ex-Colonial Secretary, because Mr. Chamberlain, on 27th July last, after his return from South Africa, said—

> "I am not professing that I am going to take the opinion of the Legislative Council as a final opinion in such a matter."

I do not take it as a final opinion in the matter, and noble Lords opposite can hardly complain of me on that account. Then I come to the petition. Has that petition been examined? Has any one here seen it, or does any one present know how many people signed it in the same handwriting? My noble friend opposite, the Leader of the House, is now an old Parliamentary hand; he has had a large experience of public affairs, and probably knows the value of petitions of that sort, particularly when they are got up under the ægis of mighty corporations, who exercise all the pressure possible for the purpose of obtaining the required result. I cannot see how a petition can be held to be equivalent to the free declaration of an elected Legislature. You may take all these four together, and they do not approach in the smallest degree to the authority which would be afforded you by the Legislature of a self-governing colony; therefore the whole responsibility rests upon the Government. They must defend these proposals; they cannot rest upon the authority of a non-existing Government. The Government must defend the proposals in all their details On them rests the responsibility, and they cannot shirk it. We have not got before us either the free voice of a free Legislature, or even the result of a referendum. We have nothing effectual to show what are the real views of this community. I will go further and say that in this case, in which so great and enormous intercolonial considerations are to be found, I should hesitate long if I were occupying the position of Colonial Secretary, before I could safely, even at the bidding of a free colonial Legislature, disregard those considerations and cast them to the winds. I do hope that it is not too late to make this remonstrance, but I am afraid it is. I am afraid that all the indications go to show that the Government have made up their minds. If they have, it must be so; but, my Lords, they are taking a very weighty and a very grave responsibility upon their shoulders, and they are establishing a system which is unworthy of the character of this country, which is restrictive of the employment of British labour, and which will, I fear, be fraught with the deepest injury to the future progress of South Africa.

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for Papers relating to the affairs of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, with special reference to the question of the employment of Chinese labour in the Transvaal.—(*The Marquess of Ripon.*)

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): My Lords, I remember that at the end of last session the noble Marquess the Leader of this House said, in a speech on the fiscal policy, that he was anxious not only to have a revolver in his hand, but also that it might on occasions be loaded. I cannot help feeling that during the recess noble Lords opposite have purloined that revolver and have loaded it with two barrels and presented it, on the first day that your Lordships have met, at the head of one of the most unimportant members of His Majesty's Government in this House. I recognise the force of the double discharge all the more when I remember what a distinguished political marksman the noble Marquess is who spoke last, but I can assure him that I have no desire to take cover. I will come out into the open and do my best to reply to the many questions and points of view which he and the noble Earl who spoke first have put forward. I think I may say at the outset, in reply to the noble Earl, that the Secretary of State, in submitting this Blue-book to your Lordships and to the other House, has included everything that he thought could be of possible value to your Lordships, and although, as the noble Earl pointed out, there may be certain passages omitted, those passages, I believe, were not at all pertinent to the question; and I think I am right in saying that it is not unusual on occasions to leave out certain passages. The noble Earl said something about reports being "garbled." I do not know whether he was referring to this Blue-book.

The EARL of PORTSMOUTH: What I said was that I should like all these despatches of Lord Milner published in full.

*The DUKE of MARLBOROUGH: The noble Earl has the despatches from Lord Milner in this Blue-book, and the points that are pertinent are included. I notice, moreover, that the noble Earl declined to look at the Blue-book. He said it was of no use to him, and then he proceeded to quote Mr. Tarbutt. If the noble Earl had looked a little more into the Blue-book he would have discovered that the identical passage he alluded to is included in it. The noble Marquess has dealt with many poits of view of the South African question but in order to appreciate thoroughly the question of Asiatic labour it is necessary for us to remember that the financial success of South Africa depends largely upon this great staple industry, the mining industry. Your Lordships will remember, if you go back to the year 1870, that the revenue of the Transvaal at that time was only some £60,000. Up to 1885 it never amounted to more than £200,000; then in 1887 gold was discovered and we immediately witnessed a change. The revenue in that year amounted to £667,00 and we see that each succeeding year following up to the years before the war, the revenue of the country increased in proportion as gold was discovered. In fact, the revenue reached no less a figure than between £4,000,000 and £4,500,000 of money.

The Duke of Marlborough.

I rather understood from his remarks that the noble Earl had some slight misgivings, I can hardly say prejudice, against the mining industry. I know the industry is regarded by some as if it were a kind of speculative concern where one man is pitted against another in order to extract the greatest amount of gold out of the soil. I think that is the wrong view to take of Johannesburg. The mining industry is one huge industrial concern, and the only difference between that and an industry in Great Britain is this, that whereas we manufacture woollen goods, or iron, or steel, the people of Johannesburg manufacture gold. On this industry, which is, as I say, an industrial venture, the success and the prosperity of the colony largely depend. It is their one great asset. As your Lordships are aware, the mining industry has not of late flourished. Indeed, out of the 7,000 stamps that have been put down, I believe only half that number are working, and the immediate result is that the prosperity of the colony is not so great as anticipated. What is this lack of development due to? It is due to the depression in the mining industry. What, again, is that depression due to? Why, to the difficulty with regard to the labour supply. Let us consider a moment this question of the supply of labour, and also the Report of the Labour Commission with regard to it. I understood both the noble Earl and the noble Marquess to criticise considerably the composition of the Labour Commission. I cannot help thinking that it was a fairly representative Commission. I notice upon it some Dutch members and some members of the Johannesburg Town Council, on the whole it seems to me to have been a fairly representative Commission. Anyway, I am sure noble Lords will admit this, that the Commission was perfectly competent to hear the evidence that was brought before it, and that the members discharged their duties in a satisfactory and proper manner. The characteristic of this Commission was that everybody was allowed to express his opinions openly and freely, and although the Minority Report failed to establish their contention, yet they gave their opinion with that freedom of expression, which we are accustomed to from such minorities in a representative system of Government.

Your Lordships will notice that the Labour Commission divided the various territories from which supplies of labour could possibly be recruited under four heads—the districts where free recruiting was permitted, districts where recruiting was prohibited, districts where recruiting was limited, and districts where it was allowed under certain conditions. In the Transvaal itself, it was estimated that there were only 620,000 natives, of whom only six in ten were capable of doing the work. In Swaziland out of a population of 100,000, 6,000 was the maximum number of adults available; in Orange River Colony there was a shortage of labour for local requirements; in Basutoland the Resident Commissioner said that 37,000 men were employed and that the Transvaal cannot expect natives from that country. Then I come to Cape Colony. The evidence shows that there the demand for natives is greater than the supply. In Bechuanaland the Assistant Commissioner said that the full total of natives from that district available would be 2,500. But I would rather draw your Lordships' attention to the conclusions of the Majority Report, which were: (1) That the demand for native labour for agriculture in the Transvaal is largely in excess of the present supply, and as the development of the country proceeds this demand will greatly increase. (2) That the demand for native labour for the Transvaal mining industry is in excess of the present supply by about 120,000 labourers, and it is estimated that the mines of the Witwatersrand alone will require within the next five years an additional supply of 196,000 labourers. (3) That the demand for native labour for the Transvaal industries, including railways, is greatly in excess of the present supply. (4) That there is no adequate supply of labour in Central and South Africa to meet the above requirements.

I gathered that the noble Marquess attached no importance to the finding of the Majority Report. He had some doubt as to its value, but I ask your Lordships is there any other testimony at all that we have to support the finding contained in the Majority Report? What is the experience of the Transvaal Government itself in this matter? Our experience absolutely substantiates the finding of the Majority Report. If your Lordships will turn to page 69 of the Blue-book you will find a telegram from Lieut.-Governor Sir Arthur Lawley, which runs as follows—

> "In view of the existing scarcity of labour, I have decided that the railways must suffer to some extent as well as agricultural and commercial industries."

On page 175 there is another telegram from Lord Milner, in which he says—

> "The immediate prospect is very bad. There is complete stagnation in commerce and enterprise, owing to the labour difficulty, and it affects almost every branch of revenue."

And, finally, if your Lordships turn to page 176, there is a subsequent telegram from Lord Milner, in which he says—

> "There are no signs of an adequate amount of labour being obtained from existing sources of supply. The consequent depression in every kind of business is increasing daily, the revenue is falling off, many people are out of work, and if the situation does not soon change a considerable exodus of the white population is inevitable."

The Minority Report, which I do not think has been alluded to this evening, does not agree with the figures in the Majority Report. They claim that as labour can be found in territories north of latitude 22 in Central Africa and in Uganda, an adequate labour supply should be obtained from those territories, but this is not possible, and I will explain why. The natives who live in Central Africa live in a very hot and tropical climate. They exist upon fruit and vegetables of the district, and if you import them into Johannesburg, which is subject to a very cold and rigorous climate, you find your chances of success extremely limited. I believe, also, that the native supply from Uganda is quite impracticable. Indeed, when Mr. Chamberlain was in South Africa, he admitted that it was very unlikely that any labour could be got from Uganda. I am, moreover, reminded that sleeping sickness exists in Uganda, and that it would be very dangerous to import it into the colony. Indeed, I think if we imported this illness into the Transvaal we might run the risk of bringing about a state of commercial repose at which even the noble Earl on the Cross Benches might feel rather horrified. There is further testimony with regard to the impracticability of using labour from Central Africa. Sir George Farrar himself says—

> "No one would dream of investing capital in an enterprise worked on the assumption of labour being employed from Central Africa."

The Minority Report put the population of Central Africa at 6,000,000, and of South Africa at 7,000,000, making a total of 13,000,000 in all, and then they said that surely out of this enormous population the mining community ought to be able to find a sufficient supply for their requirements. If this had been really the case, we should never have had any labour trouble at all, a Labour Commission would never have sat, and I venture to think this question would never have been brought to the attention of your Lordships. We may just as well dismiss this consideration entirely. It is clear that the evidence before the Commission conclusively showed that everywhere in South Africa where labour might be got, that labour is required by each individual State itself, and that as regards Central Africa and in Uganda, districts to which we might possibly look for a labour supply, all efforts have failed to secure an adequate amount of labour from those parts.

I have dealt with the number of men that are available; let us consider a moment the number of men that are required. Again we find a difference of opinion between the Majority and the Minority Reports. They disagree, in the first place, as to the number of men required on the farms, and, secondly, as to the number required in the mines. The Majority Report states that twenty men per stamp are necessary in the mines, whilst the minority say that twelve are sufficient. All the mining experts who are qualified to judge in this matter are unanimous that the number of men required per stamp is twenty, and I think we require very strong evidence to the contrary to prove that the statement is inaccurate. I am reminded, moreover, that the Rand mines themselves were employing fifteen or sixteen men per stamp before the war, and are now obliged to work with only ten men per stamp. It has been said for some time that these figures have been prepared more or less for the Labour Commission, but that is not so. They form the basis on which the distribution of natives among the different mines was made under what is known as the Native Labour Organisation, and the figures were prepared eighteen months ago, long before this Labour Commission was dreamt of. I think the difference between the Majority and Minority Report is this, that whereas the Minority base their figures on the difference of the requirements of the Transvaal before the war and those of the present time, the Majority base their figures on the difference between those that exist to-day and the full requirements of the Transvaal, supposing the developments were at their full and legitimate capacity. I think our duty is fairly clear. Although we give every consideration to the Minority Report signed by two, yet we have to take into consideration a great deal more the Majority Report signed by ten, and His Majesty's Government are satisfied, in view of the evidence of the Commission and the Transvaal Government being exactly the same in both cases, that there is an insufficient supply of black labour available in South Africa to meet the requirements of the mining and other industries. The noble Earl said he did not think the natives in South Africa had been treated with sufficient consideration, that their wages had not been so satisfactory as he would have wished, and that the reduction of wages on the part of the mine managers was partly the cause of the lack of labour at the present time. But I would remind the noble Earl that it was the Transvaal Government itself which, before the war, reduced the amount of wages to the labourers. It is true that after the war was over the mining authorities did not increase the wages quite so quickly as probably would have been wise, but they were slowly increased from 20s. to 30s., and gradually they were raised to a figure between 60s. and 70s. per month. The noble Earl suggested that the natives were not properly treated.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I quoted statistics from Sir Godfrey Lagden, showing that whereas in the De Beer mines the rate of mortality was only 30 per 1,000 per annum, the rate in the Rand mines was 70 per 1,000 per annum.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: What is the noble Earl's inference?

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: If the mortality is double in the Rand mines, it is clear that the men cannot work there under very healthy conditions.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: There is a great difference. One set of men are working in gold mines, and the other in diamond mines, and, moreover, Johannesburg is a very unhealthy place. The noble Earl will probably know that Dr. Moffatt was recently out in South Africa, and his testimony was that the natives were exceedingly well cared for in all the districts which he visited, and he had no complaint to make as to the treatment they received. Since there is an insufficient supply of black labour, let us consider what other sources of supply there exist. It has been urged to-day by the noble Marquess and the noble Earl that we should use more white labour. In fact, I understand them to say that neither Lord Milner nor the mining authorities had sufficiently turned their attention to this question. Now, what is the evidence in this matter that we have before us? Directly after the war was over, who were the first people to employ white unskilled labour in South Africa? It was the mining authorities themselves. Sir Percy Fitzpatrick went to Lord Kitchener and asked him to allow the use of any men he did not require, and the consequence was that on the mines for which he was responsible they employed some 1,200 men. What was the result of that experiment? They found that after a certain time they were unable to continue using in large quantities white unskilled labour, because the increased cost of the output was so excessive.

The noble Earl referred in the course of his speech to the question of the increased cost of labour, and also to the dividends on the mines. I can assure the noble Earl that, so far as His Majesty's Government are concerned, we have no interest at all in knowing what the dividends are. All we want to know is that the share-holders are satisfied, because if the shareholders are satisfied more capital will be invested in the Transvaal, and as a consequence those subsidiary industries on which we rely for the future prosperity of the country will flourish to a greater degree. Then there was another gentleman, named Mr. Creswell, who tried to employ white labour. What was his experience? The managers of his mine said they were unable to continue using white unskilled labour to a large extent because it became so expensive. The experts in this matter are all unanimous in the opinion that the employment of white unskilled labour is impracticable because of the excessive cost. The noble Earl has referred to the letter of Mr. Tarbutt. It is not my business to defend that letter. It contained an unfortunate expression on his part, perhaps, but I do not think you may generalise from one particular instance. I think I may say that these mining experts and engineers, and everybody connected with the mines, have been actuated in the statements they have made by the highest sense of duty, and have not made false statements for political purposes or political ends.

But there is yet further testimony with regard to the employment of white labour, and that is the testimony of the Transvaal Government itself. It has been said to-night that His Majesty's Government had not sufficiently turned their attention to promoting the employment of white labour in South Africa. What did the Government do last year? We sent out 900 men from this country to be employed on the railways in South Africa, and you will find on page 159 of the Blue-book a full detailed statement of the experience of the Transvaal Government with regard to the employment of white navvies. Our experience was that after nine months the cost was so excessive that we were unable to continue employing these men any longer. There is another point of equal importance. It is this. The black man and the white man will not work together. The white man finds the proximity of the black man extremely distasteful to him, and no one can claim that the force of this argument is diminished when it is remembered that the black man heartily reciprocates the same sentiments towards us. It has been pointed out by the noble Earl and the noble Marquess that this employment of Asiatic labour will curtail the employment of white men. I do not think that that is so. I understand that Asiatic is to be employed more for the kind of pioneer work. His employment necessitates the employment also of Kaffirs in other work, and where the Kaffir is employed, it is obvious that you require white men to supervise him and to act as overseers. The employment of Asiatics therefore, will open up a greater number of mines than are working at present; a greater number of Kaffirs will be employed, and there will be more work for the white man as overseer; so that the direct effect of Asiatic labour will be to increase the demand for white labour rather than to diminish it.

If I may venture to recapitulate my argument, it is this, that the prosperity of the Transvaal depends upon the success of the great staple industry of the country—the great mining industry. The mining industry to-day relies for all its maintenance and success on an ample supply of labour for its requirements, and it is depressed because it cannot get a sufficient supply of labour. The evidence is conclusive that there is not a sufficient supply, as is shown by the Report of the Majority Commission and by the evidence obtained by the Transvaal Government itself. White labour has been tried both by the mining people themselves and by the Transvaal Government, and in both cases it has been found impracticable owing to the expense. The noble Marquess has insinuated that His Majesty's Government desire to burke the discussion of this matter. We have no desire to do that at all. I think he used the words "indecent haste." I can assure him it has not been the wish of the Secretary of State to prevent Parliament from discussing this matter. He has given them the first and most favourable opportunity to discuss the question; and, so far as your Lordships are concerned, you certainly have no complaint to make of the treatment of His Majesty's Government.

Then the noble Marquess said it was impossible for us to treat the Transvaal as if it were a self-governing colony, and that in the last resort we were responsible. Nobody denies that fact, but the reason why the Secretary of State said he was anxious to treat them as far as he could in the position of a self-governing colony was that he desired to continue the policy of his predecessor. The noble Marquess said, amidst the cheers of his followers, that we could not divest ourselves of the responsibility of the government of the Transvaal. We have no desire to do so. On the other hand, Mr. Chamberlain, speaking on the South African War Contribution Bill, said—

> "I believe I can safely, on behalf of the whole House of Commons, say that, although technically they are Crown colonies, and as such subject in the last resort to any ultimatum that may be propounded from Downing Street, the Government will treat them in all matters in which Imperial interests are not directly concerned as if they were self-governing colonies."

That opinion of Mr. Chamberlain's was endorsed by members of the Party to which the noble Marquess belongs, and, having accepted it, I do not think they can blame His Majesty's Government for continuing the policy of Mr. Chamberlain as stated last summer in the House of Commons. Now, I venture to think that in this problem before us, the request of the Transvaal to import Asiatics into their territory, we have to decide in the first place whether this demand is based on grounds which are both reasonable and intelligible, and I trust that noble Lords may think that their demand is reasonable and intelligible. In the second place, after we have decided whether the demand is reasonable and intelligible, we have to make up our minds whether it is in conformity with the wishes of the people themselves. But before considering that point, your Lordships will, perhaps, allow me to remind you of the position of the question when Lord Milner last went back to South Africa. The Report of the Labour Commission became known to us, and it was also known that a Resolution would be introduced in consequence in the Legislative Assembly. His Majesty's Government told Lord Milner that before they could sanction such a measure they must have, first of all, a full expression of opinion from him as to the indications of public feeling in the Transvaal. Lord Milner said, in reply, that he thought the vote in the Legislative Council on the Resolution reflected the full state of public opinion, that the scale of opinion had changed of late considerably, and it will be seen that Lord Milner was strengthened in his opinion by the fact that this Resolution was passed by nine votes to four of the unofficial, and by twenty to four of the official and unofficial members together. We therefore consented to the introduction of a Government measure, always reserving to ourselves the right to modify our views if opinions of a pronounced character or of an organised nature were made against it.

We are censured to-day almost, for the contemplation of the immigration of Asiatics into the Transvaal. It was our view, and we were bound to take into consideration the opinion of the Transvaal itself. We felt that a grave responsibility would be on our shoulders if, without cause or reason, and without any other remedy to suggest, we prevented the discussion of this measure in the Transvaal. The decision of the Legislative Assembly on the merits of the Resolution was received with a general sense of relief, and there were no signs of active hostility to the measure, least of all in the country districts. It was therefore in the belief that this Resolution of the Legislative Assembly represented the opinion and the wishes of the inhabitants of the Transvaal, and that no organised opposition had been made against it, that His Majesty's Government consented to a Government measure being brought in, based on the terms of the Resolution that had alreadybeen adopted. The course we took is justified by the evidence that existed in favour of Chinese immigration. The more we consider it the more we may be satisfied that the conclusions to which His Majesty's Government arrived were both wise in substance and correct in form.

The noble Marquess has dealt very fully with the evidence on this matter in South Africa generally and in the Transvaal. Let us for a moment consider what the evidence is. We must take, in the first place, the opinion of the Transvaal itself. but it would be improper to ignore the opinion of South Africa in general. Let us consider the terms of the Bloemfontein Resolution to which Lord Milner has referred. That Resolution was passed by all the representatives of the colonies in South Africa, who we may believe largely reflected the opinion of the people they represented. It was carried absolutely unanimously, and the statesman who proposed it was no other than the Prime Minister of the Cape, Sir Gordon Sprigg himself. I do not know whether I need read the Bloemfontein Resolution—the noble Marquess has quoted it—but it was to the effect that if industrial development positively demanded it, then Asiatic labourers under a system of patrol should be permitted to enter. The noble Marquess has said that the Cape is opposed to this measure. It is true there is an agitation there—a slight agitation—at the present time, but we hope that it will pass away. If your Lordships will turn to page 187 of the Blue-book, you will see there what Lord Milner says with regard to this agitation—

> "In the Cape alone is there any marked opposition, but this is in the main quite clearly due to electioneering. The Bond is seeking to make up for the votes lost to it through disfranchisement by a bid for the native vote.

I do not wish to dwell too much on the fact that the elections are taking place in the Cape, but I am sure that noble Lords who have had to submit themselves to popular suffrage will remember that frequently matters which in ordinary times did not seem very important assume during an election great importance; in fact, I daresay it has been the experience of some noble Lords that they have been obliged, during an election, to sink all their opinions on Imperial matters in order to discuss domestic questions, such as the vaccination of infants and the dangers to the State of unmuzzled dogs.

I turn from the consideration of the Cape to the other self-governing colony, Natal. What is the opinion in Natal towards this question? In July last a Motion was introduced both into the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly, protesting against the introduction of Asiatic labour into South Africa. That Motion was defeated in both Houses, and in one by an overwhelming majority. I think, therefore, we may claim that there is no direct preponderance of opinion in Natal against the importation of Asiatics. In Rhodesia there has been for some time past a strong desire for the importation of Asiatic labour, and the inhabitants of this country are supposed to regard with favour its introduction, not only into the Transvaal but into their own territory as well. The Orange River Colony has expressed its desire not to interfere with the declared wishes of the Transvaal, and the Transvaal itself is in favour of Chinese labour. It is clear, therefore, that if you take South Africa as a whole, there are four colonies which have expressed their opinion not unfavourably to the proposal, and only one, namely, the Cape, which has during the last two months displayed an unwonted hostility against it. We may claim, therefore, that the opinion of South Africa as a whole is in favour, and not against, the proposals of the Transvaal Government.

I now come to the expression of opinion in the Transvaal itself. What evidence have we in this direction ? This evidence is the most important of all, because I think that we must admit that this matter is one which, as it affects the Transvaal directly, should be to the greatest extent determined by the opinions and wishes of the colony itself. We have, in the first place, the expression of opinion of the representatives of the Transvaal who supported the Bloemfontein Conference Resolution. In the second place we have the evidence of the majority of those who sat on the Labour Commission. We have, thirdly, to remember that the principle of the Ordinance was passed in the Legislative Council by a considerable majority, and that the Second Reading of the Government measure was carried without a division. Fourthly, there is the evidence of the Dutch population themselves. Ben Viljoen's evidence before the Commission is one which we cannot ignore. He said a great number of Boers see and feel the state of things at present prevailing through the state of the labour market, and would, therefore, agree to supplement the labour supply by importing labour if done under strict rules and proper legislation.

This statement which I have quoted agrees with the opinion that Lord Milner expressed, that while the majority of the Dutch are anxious to see the experiment of Asiatic labour tried, they are not prepared to give strong expressions of opinion in favour of it. We believe that, though the Legislative Council is no doubt a nominated Council, it does not possess in a Parliamentary sense a representative character; nevertheless, the decision they have taken on this subject is a decision in the best interests of the colony, and does not misinterpret the wishes or offend the sentiment of its population. I notice that my noble friend Lord Tweedmouth does not agree with my remarks. Noble Lords opposite may be right, and we may be wrong, but if we are right, I am reminded that this will not be the first time in the annals of our political life when an Assembly elected not on the basis of a popular franchise has rightly interpreted the desires and wishes of the people whose trustees they are. Reference has been made to a referendum, but I gather that both the noble Earl and the noble Marquess agreed with His Majesty's Government that it would be unnecessary and unwise to have had recourse to a referendum.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Because it is dishonest.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Why a referendum should be dishonest I fail to understand. However, I agree thoroughly with the noble Earl and with the noble Marquess that it is not necessary to have a referendum.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I only said that I thought a referendum was not a good method of obtaining the views of the public. I do not say that a referendum would not show better than your present testimony what the views of the people are.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH My point is this: What is the use of having a referendum when it is not really required ? Why should we put the colony to the vast expense and trouble of this novel and unprecedented method ? The object of a referendum is to enable people to reject a measure they dislike without destroying a Government of which they approve, but by a referendum I do not think you would get that exact expression on the merits of the case which those who advocate a referendum are so anxious to ascertain. Though the opposition of the introduction of Asiatic labour is a natural one, and one with which we sympathise, yet we must not forget the problem that we are called on to solve. Are we prepared to arrest that development of the Transvaal which the inhabitants themselves have tried to build up? The superstructure which has been created during the last two years, a superstructure which comprises such items as railway extension, extensive municipal works both in Johannesburg and Pretoria, and vast sums of money laid out on the Rand water supply—this superstructure has been built up in the belief and in the anticipation that it would be sustained by the increased development of the main staple industry of the country. If we are not prepared to arrest this development, then we are reminded that the Resolution of the Bloemfontein Conference was founded on reasonable ground—

> "That if industrial development positively demands it, unskilled labourers under a system of Government control should be permitted."

This Ordinance, and the conclusion contained in it, we believe place the immigrants under Government control. The evils of importation of Asiatics have been dwelt on. I would only remind you, in reply, that whereas other countries have imported Chinese first of all and then legislated for them, the Transvaal proposes to legislate for them in the first place under a system of control, and then allow them to enter into the Colony. It is in the assurance that the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards this question has not been that of blind favouritism, born of a first impression, but the conviction that there is no other solution, that I hope you will record your sanction to the methods which the Transvaal Government have taken to solve this difficult and complex problem, a problem concerning which the Transvaal is so anxiously and so earnestly awaiting the decision of the Imperial Parliament.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I approach this question from a somewhat different standpoint from that occupied either by the noble Earl who opened the discussion, or by the noble Marquess who succeeded him, for whatever difference of opinion may ultimately exist as to the urgency of the problem which has now to be solved, I should have thought that it would have been impossible for anyone who had studied the Blue-books carefully not to realise the immense difficulty which surrounds it. In the speech made in opening the debate, the subject was referred to as though the solution was not really a matter of any difficulty; all we had to do was to refuse to assent to the proposal which had emanated from the Transvaal itself. To my mind, the matter is far more complex. Indeed, I am not prepared to say that, great as are the objections to this immigration, the difficulties are not equally great if we were simply and bluntly to follow the course which the noble Earl has suggested. I do not desire to enter into a discussion on the economic or the political aspects of the question. I wish to deal simply with the moral aspect of the subject, which it seems to me has been treated with strangely little consideration, both in the correspondence which appears in the Blue-book, in the resolutions passed by the various South African bodies for and against the proposal now made, and in the speech of the noble Duke. It does seem to me that sufficient attention has not been given in any of these quarters to a matter which lies at the root of the question before us.

I have read without the slightest preconceived idea, and certainly, so far as I know, without bias, all the material which has been circulated on the subject. I will not profess that I have been able to look through that huge and priceless volume, which is one of the rarest of the treasures possessed by our library, but by the kindness of the noble Duke I have been allowed to glance at the copy in his custody, and I have examined the index, from which it does not seem that the moral aspect of the subject is alluded to in the multitudinous pages. This appears to me the more strange inasmuch as there exist in records of the past long accounts of discussions which took place half a century ago upon the difficulties that surround the moral, or, if it is preferred to call it so, the social aspect of this question. I do not for a moment believe that the Government is advocating this particular solution of the labour problem simply because it is important to secure better dividends for mine-owners. I do not for a moment share that view. If better dividends are wanted from the mines, it is because the prosperity of the two new Colonies cannot, so far as it appears, go forward as we wish, unless this the greatest and most important industry of that region continues to be successful. Therefore those of us who are thinking more of the moral and educational progress of the Colony than of its monetary wealth, are yet actively concerned in the endeavour to make the mines profitable, because we appreciate that the immediate question of dividends is secondary to far greater interests beyond.

I want to press the point that whereas in the past history of our different colonies, when there has been consideration of this question of Chinese immigration, there have been minute arrangements made for meeting the moral and social difficulties surrounding it, these difficulties do not appear to have received any adequate consideration in the present case. This is to me a new study; but it will be remembered by some of your Lordships that during the years 1852 to 1858 there were discussions upon the introduction of Chinese labour into the West Indies, into Trinidad, into British Guiana, and to some extent into Mauritius; and your Lordships will find that when the subject was under discussion in those years there was letter after letter, despatch after despatch, and witness after witness was called upon to discuss and deliberate upon the regulations that could best be made for preventing the moral evils that might result from such immigration. There were communications for example from Mr. Consul Alcock, then at work in China, and afterwards so well known to your Lordships as Sir Rutherford Alcock, in which he indicated the perils of bringing together large numbers of male Chinese, in the manner now suggested. Again there was a correspondence between the Colonial Land Commission and the Duke of Newcastle in 1854 on the subject. Many examples I might give to show that this is a matter requiring an amount of careful consideration it does not seem to me to have received on the present occasion. What I feel is this. After reading what has been put into our hands and comparing it with what was done half a century ago on similar occasions in dealing with our Colonies or other lands, and after to-night listening to the noble Duke, I remain as ignorant as I was before as to what are the plans, the hopes, or the anticipations of His Majesty's Government on this particular point. Has it been considered, and if so, where shall we find the results of that consideration? If the gravity of the problem has not been considered, then it is high time that we should give attention to it.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

If the Government can tell us the matter has really been duly weighed, and that plans have been made, and are expected to work satisfactorily, then I would not press that all such particulars or such details as the noble Marquess has asked for should be given to us before the Ordinance is sanctioned. I trust, however, that before the debate closes more information will be given to us with regard to the several regulations which are left to the discretion of the Lieutenant-Governor, subject to the approval of His Majesty's Government. We have in these Blue-books three copies of the Ordinance, and they differ widely in regard to the possibility of wives and families accompanying or following the labourers. The first draft of the Ordinance as enclosed in the despatch of 5th December, has two or three clauses upon the subject, making the introduction of wives and children lawful, but these disappear in the second draft, given to us at a later date, and we merely have the provision that the Lieutenant-Governor may make regulations for the introduction, repatriation, and control of families. In the third copy this provision remains, and, further, there is a clause providing that it shall not be lawful for the wives or members of any family belonging to the race or tribe of any labourer to enter or reside in the colony except under conditions there alluded to. We want to know, not necessarily in detail, but in the roughest outline what the conditions are. We want to be assured that this system of indentured immigration will not be introducing a poison of a terrible kind into the community where the Chinese may be settled. If it is said this poison cannot be introduced because of the restraints put upon the immigrants, and that the evil cannot become rampant, because the Chinamen will be deprived of all liberty of action, or locomotion, or intercourse with other people, such a line of defence strikes one as in itself difficult to justify. At all events it is certainly a form of administration a little difficult to reconcile with the liberties and freedom which should exist in a British colony. It may be that the regulations have been well thought out, and that His Majesty's Government can tell us in outline how they mean to deal with the subject; but we ought to pause before we allow what is now proposed to go forward until we know that it is not going to be a source of moral and social evil in circumstances of which we have abundant examples in the history of the past in our own colonies and in those of other nations.

Moved, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Earl Grey.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

THE LOADING-PORT CLAUSE.

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I rise to again call the attention of His Majesty's Government to the Board of Trade Circular Instructions to the Superintendents of Mercantile Marine Offices relative to the loading-port clause in the articles of merchant ships; to point out further cases where this circular has caused shipowners and shipmasters great expense and inconvenience; and to ask whether they have yet received the opinion of the law officers of the Crown, to whom this matter was submitted over eight months ago. This is a subject which I introduced to your notice in the early part of May last year I, would not trouble you further upon it but for the serious fact that, although eight months have elapsed, nothing whatever appears to have been done towards removing a prolific source of trouble and expense to shipowners.

Perhaps to some of your Lordships this loading-port clause in ship's articles may be unfamiliar; therefore I may say that it is simply a clause whereby the crew of a ship in their agreement with the master agree to remain on board the ship until her arrival at the port in the United Kingdom where she may load. For instance, a ship may perhaps be bound to Hull to discharge her cargo, proceeding then to, say, Cardiff, to load, this being generally assumed as the completion of the voyage. The Board of Trade, however, voluntarily issued circular instructions to their superintendents to the effect that if the crew demand to be paid off at the port at which the ship discharges her cargo, they cannot be legally compelled to carry out their own agreement in the shape of remaining by the ship until she arrives at her loading port. This has given ships' crews an opportunity to harass shipowners and shipmasters, and to cause them great and needless expense.

In my remarks last year I quoted a case occurring in the Thames Police Court, where the legal decision was given directly against the terms of the Board of Trade circular. Since that case happened there have been several of an identical character. One decision, I believe, has been given in favour of the men, but this only shows the unsatisfactory nature of the whole position. With the exception of this one case the legal decisions have been all the other way. The action of six seamen against the captain of the steamer "Concord" at Aberdeen was dismissed by Mr. Sheriff Begg, the defendant being allowed £1 1s. expenses. At Salford a seaman sued the captain of the steamer "Alfalfa," but the stipendiary said he had little doubt about the merits of the case, and the summons was dismissed. At Birkenhead a seaman of the "Petunia" sued the master of the vessel, but the justices described the loading-port clause as "an old and accepted form of agreement," and, in adopting what they called a "common-sense view," dismissed the case. Common-sense seems to be absent from some of the Board of Trade circulars. There is also the case of a fireman of the steamer "Lobelia," who at Londonderry sued the master in a similar manner, and this summons also was dismissed.

I think I have shown to your Lordships sufficient to indicate the mischievous results which have accrued from the official circular issued by the Board of Trade. Not only is it an unwarrantable interference with our shipping interests, but it is throwing dust in the eyes of seamen, who, very mistakenly, thinking they can place absolute reliance on the pronouncements of the Board of Trade, take action in a Court of law against their superior officers. In every case but one this has subjected them to expenses and costs which they can ill afford to bear. I hope to hear that the opinion of the law officers of the Crown on the subject has now been received—it is quite time it was—and that it will result in the withdrawal of the circular which has been so emphatically condemned by shipping interests. I would also draw your Lordships' attention to the extraordinary action of the Board of Trade in issuing this circular without having first asked the opinion of the law officers of the Crown.

Lord WOLVERTON: My Lords, the Board of Trade have not been unmindful of this important matter, and on the advice of the law officers decided to take steps to obtain, by proceedings to which the Board of Trade would be a party, an authoritative decision on the validity of the Loading-Port Clause referred to in the circular instructions of the Board. After careful consideration, they decided that a friendly test case would be the best course, and, with that object in view, they invited representatives of the Shipping Federation to attend a conference. The Board of Trade are perfectly aware of the decisions quoted by the noble Lord, but, having regard to the great importance of the matter, desired a decision of the High Court. The Shipping Federation have, however, recently notified the Board that the clause in question has been altered, and the clause as altered is under the consideration of the Board.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 11th February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Colney Hatch Gas Bill; London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill; Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.:—Chippenham Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

East London and Lower Thames Electric Power Bill; North and South Woolwich Electric Railway Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill. Considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of law: from Bulwell; Frome; Bradford (two); Swansea (three); Earlestown; Padgate; Golborne; Haydock; Wigan; Isle of Wight; Newport; Ashton in Makerfield (two); Dawlish; Exeter; Leicester; Wigston; Chester; Manchester (six); Osmotherley; Morehampstead; Stockport; Cynfal; Oakengates; Llandudno; Maenan; Llanddeiniolen; Heckmondwike; Clayton West; Llangyndeyrne; Bryn; Southport (seven); Skelmanthorpe; Lowton and Newton; Fowlmere; Nottingham (three); Ilfracombe; Fishtoft; Anglesey; Llandensant; Llanfairneubwll Valley; Gaerwen; Cemaes Bay; Dwyran; Brixton; Llangwyllog; Holyhead; Beaumauris; Cardiff (five); Ilkley; Rusholme; Earlestown; Warrington; St. Just in Penwith; Glossop; Salford; South Ferriby; Ashby (two); Donington Barracks; West Felton; Fairfield; Ilkeston; Colne; Dewsbury; Durham; Jarrow; Birks Morley; Boldon Colliery; Rogerstone; Liverpool; Keswick; and Nelson (three); to lie upon the Table.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATIONS ACT, 1888.

Paper [presented 10th February] to be printed. [No. 46.]

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POOR PRISONERS' DEFENCE ACT, 1903.

Copy presented, of Draft of Rules proposed to be made by the Attorney-General, with the approval of the Lord Chancellor and the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 2 of The Poor Prisoners' Defence Act, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PENAL SERVITUDE ACTS (CONDITIONAL LICENCE).

Copy presented, of a Licence to be at large, granted to Florence Elizabeth Maybrick, to which is annexed a condition other than those contained in Schedule A of The Penal Servitude Act, 1864 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL.

Copy presented, of Reports of the Transvaal Labour Commission [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL.

Copy presented, of Reports of the Transvaal Labour Commission, Minutes of Proceedings, and Evidence [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AFRICA (No. 1, 1904).

Copy presented, of Correspondence and Report from His Majesty's Consul at Boma respecting the Administration of the Independent State of the Congo [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1903-4).

Estimate presented, of the Further Amount that will be required during the year ending 31st March, 1904, to meet the Expenditure in excess of that provided for in the original Army Estimates for the year, for the Pay, Transport, Supplies, etc., of the Army [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 47.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Portuguese Tariff Bill and Lancashire Cotton Trade.

MR. WHITE RIDLEY (Stalybridge): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the Tariff Bill now being introduced by the Government of Portugal, which proposes largely to increase the import duties on cotton and mercerised goods; and whether, in view of the importance of this question to Lancashire exporters, the British Government have any means, by commercial treaty or otherwise, of bringing pressure to bear on the Portuguese Government with a view of modifying the proposed tariff.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) My attention has been directed to the Portuguese Tariff Bill referred to by my hon. friend. At present no commercial treaty exists between this country and Portugal, but the matter has been the subject of representations to the Portuguese Government.

Conference in Egypt on Cotton and Bourse Gambling.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to a conference consisting of the representatives of seventeen Governments assembled in Egypt to consider cotton and Bourse gambling in that country; and, if so, will he say whether he can arrange that reports of the proceedings will be furnished to the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I am aware that the organisation of the Egyptian courts (which is reconsidered once in five years) is under discussion by a mixed Commission, and that one of the subjects proposed for consideration by the Commission was legislation on futures. When the Commission has concluded its deliberations, His Majesty's Government will ascertain from the Khedivial Government how far any portion of its Report referring to this subject can be published.

Future and Option Gambling in Canada.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Criminal Code of 1892 of Canada imposed five years imprisonment and 500 dollars fine on persons making bargains in fictitious goods, wares, or merchandise in Canada or elsewhere with the intent to make gain or profit by the rise or fall in prices, and that this Act received the assent of the Governor-General in 1892, while the despatch leaving the code to its operation was dated March, 1903, and was signed by Lord Ripon; and whether he can explain the omission regarding this legislation from the Blue-book recently issued on the subject of future and option gambling.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The Blue-book includes on page 10 the full text of the Minute of the Canadian Privy Council, furnished in reply to the despatch addressed to the Canadian Government at the instance of the hon. Member, as to the nature and effect of any legislation in force in Canada prohibiting or restricting gambling in option and future contracts as regards foodstuffs. I can only assume that the brevity of the reference to Sections 201 and 202 of the Criminal Code arises from the fact that, as stated in the Minute, no prosecutions have ever been instituted under these sections.

Import Duty collected on Wheat, etc., from British India.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state approximately the amount of corn duties collected on wheat, rice, and other grain from British India during the period while the recent registration charge of 1s. per quarter was in force.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The approximate amount of duty paid on corn and grain imported from British India during the time the corn and grain duties were in force was £201,000. Of this amount £128,000 was paid on account of wheat, £52,000 on account of rice, £20,000 on other grain, and £1,000 on farinaceous substances.

Learners in the Cork Post Office.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): To ask the Postmaster-General why male telegraph learners in the Cork Office, who have recently qualified, are still on half-pay, and are compelled to perform two hours work per day in the sorting office without remuneration, on the ground that they are learning their duties.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am making inquiry on the subject, and I will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Contracts for Coal Supply to Enniscorthy Post Office.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been called to the matter of the contracts for the supply of coal to the Enniscorthy Post Office; and if he will call for the correspondence which has passed in the case between Messrs. Donohoe, Limited, and the postal authorities.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) My attention has not been called to the question of the supply of coal to Enniscorthy Post Office, but I will make inquiry on the subject and communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Carriage of Mails between Limerick and Tralee.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state why the mails are not now carried by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company between Limerick and Tralee.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The Limerick and Tralee Railway is used for some of the mails for the district it serves; but the remainder are now sent by road because the railway company refused, some time ago, to continue to run trains at hours suitable for them except for a payment far beyond what would be justified for the service.

Betting Legislation.

Mr. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he will consider the advisability of introducing a Bill in the present session to deal with betting.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) I can only say that the Government have not found it possible to include this subject in their programme of legislation for the present session. At the same time, if a Bill dealing with street betting on the lines of the provisions recently obtained by several local authorities in their Private Acts were introduced by any hon. Member, it would, I think, deserve the favourable consideration of Parliament.

Record of Cancer Cases in India.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India have yet arranged to have cases of cancer recorded separately in dispensary and hospital returns.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The revised returns provide a separate column for cancer cases, but I cannot say if they have actually been brought into operation. The Government of India have the matter in hand.

Practical Cookery Instruction in Irish National Schools.

MR. KENNEDY (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the managers of a number of national schools in Ireland have provided cooking stoves and other appliances to give effect to the programme for instruction for cookery, particularly those for girls in the higher standards, prescribed by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland for the present financial year; that in the notes to teachers issued by the Commissioners in November, 1902, it was intimated that instruction by practice in the simple forms of food preparation would be continued for some years; and, whether, seeing that the Commissioners have eliminated from their programme for the coming year practical instruction for cookery, particularly in the higher standards, except for convent schools, and in view of the expense that has been incurred, the Commissioners will apply the new programme for cookery in fifth and higher standards to all rural schools so equipped where the manager applies for same, on the ground that the arrangements for instruction in cookery by itinerant instructors are insufficient.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am informed by the Board of National Education that provision for instruction in domestic economy in national schools is at present the subject of communication between the Board and the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction. It is not practicable, therefore, at present to add anything to the statement made in the introduction to the new programme. Cases, however, like that referred to in the Question will have the fullest consideration.

Audit of Belfast County Borough Accounts.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can explain why, in the reports made by the Local Government Board auditor on the Corporation accounts of the Belfast County Borough for the year ending 31st March, 1903, no reference has been made by the auditor to a series of complaints made to him; and will he give facilities to have an audit made by a competent firm of auditing accountants who would accept the responsibility of auditors.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham*). The auditor referred, in his report, to the representations made to him in respect to the question of rent to be paid by several trading undertakings and the excessive allowance for deputation expenses. Most of the objections were in the nature of criticism of the administration by the council of matters which were within its discretion and in which the auditor has no authority to intervene. The Board has perfect confidence in the auditor and is satisfied there are no grounds for superseding him as suggested.

Dublin Metropolitan Police—Retention on Active List of Superintendents Narrisey and Dempsey.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state why Superintendents Narrisey and Dempsey of the Dublin Metropolitan Police are retained on the active list, they being eligible for retirement on pension.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) There is no fixed period for the retirement on pension of members of the Dublin Metropolitan Police. They are permitted to remain in the service so long as they discharge their public duty with efficiency and to the satisfaction of their superior officers.

Erection of Technical Schools in Ireland.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is prepared to state what the Government intend doing with respect to the provisions of a building fund for the erection of suitable technical schools in Ireland; and whether it is intended to continue the equivalent grant upon the original terms, as understood by the local authorities who levied a rate, to aid in supporting technical schools within their rateable area.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I discussed these matters with the deputation that waited on me in Dublin on the 18th January, and have no further statement to make at present.

Resolutions of Asylum Committees.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of resolutions adopted by the Conference of Asylum Committees at a meeting held in Richmond Asylum on the 25th and 26th November last; and, if so, will he state whether he proposes to deal with the points raised.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The resolutions propose (1) an increase of the present capitation grant of 4s. per week in respect of the maintenance of each pauper lunatic; (2) an extension of the period for, and alteration of the conditions upon, which loans are made for asylum purposes; (3) the establishment of a central laboratory in connection with asylums; (4) the introduction of a system of boarding-out of persons of unsound mind; (5) the assimilation of the capitation grant payable in the case of patients maintained in auxiliary asylums established under Section 76 (1) of the Local Government Act, 1898, to that payable for patients in district asylums. In respect to (1), the amount of the grant in Ireland is the same as that payable in England and Scotland, and a proposal to increase it could only be considered in its application to the United Kingdom as a whole. Legislation would be necessary to give effect to the recommendations at (2), (4), and (5), and I am unable to undertake that such will be introduced during the present session. There are no funds available at present for the establishment of a central laboratory (3).

Marine Works in Connemara.

Mr. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why the Marine Works Act of last year is not put into operation in Connemara; if he will state when the proposed works under the Act for Cleggan, Clifden, and Roundstone, in Connemara, are likely to commence; and whether, in view of the approach of the fishing season in these districts, steps will be taken to execute the proposed works at the earliest day.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) With respect to the proposed works at Cleggan and Roundstone the Government has not yet received from the County Council the memorial and resolution prescribed under the Act. Forms for this purpose were communicated to the council early in August last. With regard to Clifden negotiations are still in progress.

Construction of Military Maps.

Lieut.-Colonel TUFNELL (Essex, S.E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the map made of the country north of Ladysmith on a scale of four miles to an inch in 1896 has been continued southwards as recommended by the Director of Military Intelligence; and whether, in view of the want of funds for the provision of maps for military purposes during the late war, any additional funds are now available to enable the Intelligence Department to perform their duties satisfactorily.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Arrangements are now in progress for surveying the whole of British territory south of the Zambesi on a scale suitable for military purposes provided the co-operation of all the Colonial Governments can be secured. The whole question of increasing facilities for map preparation by the Intelligence Department is now receiving careful consideration.

Construction of Railway Embankment between Chiromo and Blantyre.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that large quantity of the material used in the construction of the embankment of the railway between Chiromo and Blantyre was taken from the banks of the Shiré river, and that, owing to the nature of the material many miles of the embankment were washed away during the wet season; and, if so, will he state if the construction of the railway is under contract; and if so, at how much per mile.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) I am not aware of the facts alluded to by the hon. Member. The conditions under which the railway in question is being constructed were explained in Africa No. 9 of 1903 (p. 3).

Chinese Government and the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what steps have been taken by him to ascertain the views of the Chinese Government on the regulations with regard to the proposed introduction of indentured Chinese labour into the Transvaal, which, in the despatch of 16th January, he stated His Majesty's Government considered to be necessary before sanctioning the Ordinance.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) His Majesty's Government are in communication with the Chinese Minister in London on the subject.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

War Office Intelligence Department.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what recognition, if any, has been accorded to Sir John Ardagh, Major Altham, and the other officers of the Intelligence Division, for the preparation during the years 1896–1899 of memoranda, and the summarisation of these memoranda in the Handbook of Military Notes in June, 1899, of information which, according to the Report of the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa, gave a correct impression of the numerical strength, armament, and plans of the Boers.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): It is not customary to reward officers for faithful performance of the ordinary duties which appertain to their respective offices; and the preparation of the information alluded to forms part of the ordinary office work of the Intelligence Department. Sir John Ardagh was made a K.C.M.G. after his retirement in 1902, and Colonel Altham has been promoted to a substantive colonelcy.

South African Reservists—Rifle-sights.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can explain how it was that every Lee-Enfield rifle placed in the hands of each of the 25,000 Reservists who were sent to South Africa in the winter of 1899 was so sighted that the rifle shot eighteen inches to the right at 500 yards; and what steps have been taken to prevent the recurrence of such an error.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: As regards the first part of the Question will the hon. Member kindly refer to the ample information given on this subject by my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary, during the debate on the Queen's Speech of 1st February, 1900.† I may, however, point out that the error of the position of the sight was only $\frac{3}{100}$ of an inch. As regards future action a more stringent system of inspection of the sighting of rifles has been adopted so as to guard against a recurrence of this error.

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† See (4) *Debates*, lxxviii., 340.

Military Armaments, Stores, etc.—Precautions against Deficiencies.

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can explain why, at the outbreak of the Boer War, there was the deficiency in armaments, reserves of guns, ammunition, stores, and clothing, and in regard to the power of output of material of war in emergency, described in Sir Henry Brackenbury's Minute of 15th December, 1899, and what steps have been taken to render this state of affairs impossible in the future.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am afraid that it is not possible within the limits of a reply to a Question to give an answer to the first part of this Question, but if the hon. Member will kindly refer to Paragraph 55 of the Report of the Royal Commission he will find considerable information on the subject. As regards the second part of the Question, the provision of the guns, stores, clothing, etc., recommended by the Mowatt Committee is being carried out; and will practically be completed by the middle of 1904. To guard against a recurrence of deficiencies of stores it has been decided that the reserves shall be permanently maintained, and that any guns, ammunition, stores, or clothing withdrawn for service shall be immediately and automatically replaced.

Galway Harbour — Naval Visits.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state the number of His Majesty's cruisers visiting Galway Harbour during the past twelve months; and whether the harbour was visited during the year by foreign cruisers.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): His Majesty's cruisers "Good Hope," "Drake," "Hogue," "Sutlej," and four destroyers were at Galway on 30th July, 1903, during His Majesty's visit to Ireland; and His Majesty's cruiser "Hawke" visited Galway in May, 1903. H.M. Gunboat "Skipjack" also visited Oranmore, near Galway, in December, 1903. The only foreign war vessel that has been reported as visiting Galway since the 1st January, 1903, is the French first class protected cruiser "Guichen," which was sent to search for the missing French transport "La Vienne" on the West Coast of Ireland. She put in at Galway on the 23rd January last, and left that port on the 25th of the same month.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN: Are we to understand that the Admiralty consider this harbour perfectly safe?

[No answer was returned.]

Proposed Coaling Station in South Wales.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether His Majesty's Government will consider the advisability of accepting the offer of a port in South Wales as a Government coaling station and store depôt, which port lies within some nine or ten miles of a number of collieries upon the Admiralty list, and was offered at a rate which would practically render it self-supporting, and at which arrangements could be made for the storage of 300,000 to 500,000 tons of smokeless South Wales coal, which could be loaded at all times without dislocation of trade in South Wales or the payment of any emergency prices.

MR. PRETYMAN: It is not considered desirable to accept the offer, as no circumstances, in the opinion of the Admiralty, are likely to arise that would render such a course necessary, nor is it desirable to store a large quantity of coal in South Wales, as it is of importance that coal shipped for the naval service should be fresh wrought.

British Indians and Transvaal Draft Ordinance.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India has given its assent to Clause 34 of the Transvaal Draft Ordinance, by which Clauses 22 to 28, dealing with the return of labourers to their country of origin, shall apply to British Indians.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The Government of India has not been consulted as to any clause of the Transvaal Draft Ordinance, nor is its assent necessary; but, subject to the authority of the Secretary of State in Council, it controls the exportation of labourers from India, and its action will of course depend on the state of the law on the subject in the Transvaal, as well as on other considerations. I may add that the clause to which this Question refers is intended to have only a temporary effect, pending the passing of special legislation on the subject of Indian labour.

MR. BUCHANAN: Has the Secretary of State for India given his assent to these clauses in the Transvaal Ordinance?

MR. BRODRICK: No, Sir, I have given no assent to any ordinance at present.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance—Transfer of Importers' Rights.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with reference to the Transvaal Labour Ordinance, if he can explain why the provision requiring the assent of the labourer to any assignment of the importer's rights has been withdrawn; whether the effect of the Ordinance as amended is that the rights to the services of the labourer may be assigned without his consent; and whether he proposes to ask the approval of Parliament to this part of the proposed legislation.

***THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES** (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): Under Section 11 of the Ordinance, transfers can only be made with the sanction of the Lieutenant-Governor and under regulations to be made by him, and due notice of transfers is to be given to the Superintendent of Labourers. It appears to me that these provisions enable the Lieutenant-Governor to take any steps which circumstances may render necessary in regard to the assent of the labourer to any proposed transfer. I do not propose to ask the approval of Parliament to this colonial legislation. The disallowance of such legislation is vested in the Crown acting on the advice of the Secretary of State, and if, after the discussion on the general question of the introduction of Asiatic labour, I should feel it my duty to advise His Majesty not to exercise his power of disallowance, Parliament will have the usual opportunities of criticising my action.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked whether the regulations to be made would contain a provision requiring the assent of the labourer to his being transferred?

***MR. LYTTELTON**: I cannot answer that at present.

DR. MACNAMARA: Under the Ordinance as it now stands, is the assent of the labourer necessary for his transfer to a new employer?

***MR. LYTTELTON**: I have answered that Question.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Would it be possible under the Ordinance for the right of transfer of these Asiatic labourers to be put up to public auction?

***MR. SPEAKER**: Order, order. The Ordinance cannot be debated on this Question.

Chinese Labour—Regulations for Recruiting.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the recruiting of labour in China for the Transvaal will be carried on by persons responsible to British authority, and how, and by whom, appointed; and what steps will be taken under British authority to ensure that before the labourers leave China they are made fully aware of the wages they are to be paid and the very special restrictions under which their labour is to be performed.

***MR. LYTTELTON**: The hon. Member will see that Clause 6 of the Ordinance (Cd. 1898) provides that no person shall introduce labourers into the Transvaal except under licence from the Lieutenant-Governor, and I am in communication with Lord Milner as to the manner in which he proposes to secure, under the licensing clause and regulations, control in the matters referred to by the hon. Member and others, connected with the recruiting of these labourers.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): Shall we have the reply of Lord Milner before we debate the subject?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I do not know, Sir.

MR. BUCHANAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman furnish us either with a summary of the debates in the Legislative Council or Lord Milner's reasons for the enormous number of alterations in the Ordinance which have been made during the past week before the House is asked to come to a decision on the question?

*MR. LYTTELTON: The Blue-book contains a full report of the most important stage in the passing of the Ordinance.

MR. BUCHANAN: In a recent Paper it is shown that there are five pages of Amendments telegraphed by Lord Milner, and no reason is given for any of these substantial Amendments.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The earlier stages are set forth in full in the Blue-book for the convenience and study of hon. Members. I cannot give any undertaking that the reports of the proceedings which caused these Amendments should be placed on the Table of the House before the debate.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden): But cannot the House see the reasons for the alterations which have been made during the past week?

*MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I understand that some of the alterations are of considerable moment. There must have been some despatch from Lord Milner to the Secretary of State explaining the Amendments and giving the reasons why they have been adopted. I do not see how the House can debate the question effectively until it has before it the reasons for accepting these Amendments. Can the right hon. Gentleman lay on the Table of the House the despatch of Lord Milner dealing with the Amendments?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I will undertake to lay before the House any Papers dealing with the subject whenever they come before me.

DR. MACNAMARA: Then can we have the debate delayed until we have the full information? I should like an answer to that Question.

[No answer was returned.]

Chinese Government and the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what steps have been taken by him to ascertain the views of the Chinese Government on the regulations with regard to the proposed introduction of indentured Chinese labour into the Transvaal, which, in the despatch of 16th January, he stated His Majesty's Government considered to be necessary before sanctioning the Ordinance.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): His Majesty's Government are in communication with the Chinese Minister in London on the subject.

MR. BUCHANAN: May I ask whether, in view of the statement of the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs and the promise in the despatch of 16th January, the House will not be asked to express its approval of the Ordinance until it learns whether the Chinese Government has given its assent to these provisions, which the Secretary for the Colonies asserted was considered necessary by the Government.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have dealt fully with these points in answer to Questions put to me by the Leader of the Opposition and other hon. Members. [Cries of "No"]

Transvaal Mines—Convict Labour.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that at a meeting of the Chamber of Mines, held in Johannesburg on 19th November last, a letter was read from the Transvaal Government offering 1,000 more native convicts for the mines; and, if so, will he state whether this offer was accepted, what is the total number of convicts so employed, what is the nature of the offences for which they have been convicted, and on what terms are they supplied to the mines.

MR. LYTTELTON: I have cabled to make the inquiry, but as yet have received no reply.

MR. WHITLEY: I will put it down again for Monday.

Labour Laws in Australia.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with reference to the imprisonment and deportation of British workmen landing in Australia under a contract of labour, why neither the Governor-General nor the Imperial Government made any use of the powers conferred upon them for the protection of British interests by the Commonwealth Act; and whether he will give an undertaking that in future Colonial legislation injuriously affecting the inhabitants of the United Kingdom will be brought to the notice of Parliament before it is assented to by the representatives of the Crown.

*MR. LYTTELTON: Cases of British workmen landing in Australia under contract of labour, other than those specially exempted under the provisions of the Australian Immigration Act, are so few that His Majesty's Government would not have been justified in refusing to sanction an important measure of legislation passed by the Commonwealth Parliament on that account. The measure has been in force for more than two years and not a single case of any British workman having been finally refused permission to land has been brought to notice. It would be impossible to give any general undertaking of the nature referred to.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Did the Governor-General use his power of sending the Bill back for amendment?

*MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir.

Land Settlement in the Transvaal.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will say what sum has been spent on the scheme of land settlement in the Transvaal; how many settlers are in actual occupation of holdings; what is the total acreage so allocated; and how much is in arable cultivation.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The latest information I possess on this subject is dated the 30th June last, and does not give several of the particulars asked for by the hon. Member. I am making inquiry as to the present position and for a Return as to these details.

Trinidad Disturbances.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Chief Justice of British Guiana, who was deputed to inquire into the conduct of the police on the occasion of the disturbances at Port of Spain, Trinidad, in connection with the Water Ordinance, has yet furnished his Report; and, if so, will he state whether it is proposed to grant compensation to the relatives of those who lost their lives.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The answer to the first part of the Question is yes; to the second part, no.

Maltese Council Election.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the text of the Bill introduced in the Council of Malta on 3rd February, purporting to amend the law relating to the election of members of the Council; and whether, in view of the fact that on the same day notice was given that a new general election will shortly be held, he will now publish the correspondence that has taken place.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am not aware that a Bill was introduced in the Malta Council of Government on the 3rd of February for the purpose stated in the Question. I do not consider that any useful purpose would be served by publishing the correspondence in question at present, and I do not propose to do so.

Railway Embankment between Chiromo and Blantyre.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that a large quantity of the material used in the construction of the embankment of the railway between Chiromo and Blantyre was taken from the banks of the Shiré river, and that, owing to the nature of the material many miles of the embankment were washed away during the wet season; and, if so, will he state if the construction of the railway is under contract, and at how much per mile.

Earl PERCY: I am not aware of the facts alluded to by the hon. Member. The conditions under which the railway in question is being constructed were explained in Africa No. 9 of 1903. (p. 3.)

Mr. WEIR: It was the case not many months ago.

Shipping Profits.

Mr. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state what were the total amounts of profits on shipping undertakings in the United Kingdom assessed for income tax in 1899–1900, 1900–1901, 1901–2, and 1902–3, respectively.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): I am afraid that it is impossible for me to give the figures asked for. No such classification exists, and I am advised that any attempt to compile one would involve a great deal of trouble and that the results when obtained would not be accurate.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: Would it not be possible to classify the profits of shipping undertakings in the same way as is done with iron works?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir. I am advised it is not possible to separate the profits on shipping undertakings from those of other undertakings carried on by the same people.

Merchandise Marks Act—Fraudulent Whiskey.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the hon. Member for Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he has received a copy of a resolution passed at a recent meeting of the Wester Ross Farmers' Club, urging the Government to take measures to stop the practice of describing and selling, as malt whiskey, blends of malt with raw grain or German spirits; and, if so, will he state what action it is proposed to take in the matter.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): I have been requested by my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture to reply to this Question. I have not seen a copy of the resolution referred to by the hon. Member, but if a complaint that a breach of the Merchandise Marks Acts has been committed, in a specific case, is submitted to me, in accordance with the regulations made under Section 2 of the Merchandise Marks Acts, 1891, I will give it my careful consideration.

Mr. WEIR: Shall I send the right hon. Gentleman a copy of the resolution in order that he may make inquiries if raw grain or German spirit is sold as malt whiskey?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I will give instructions that the hon. Member shall have a copy of the regulations dealing with this matter.

Preferential Rates for Foreign Produce.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the fact that preferential rates are allowed by railway companies to foreign and colonial importers, he will cause inquiry to be made into the matter, and report the result to the House with a view to insure equality of treatment to all consignors.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I would refer the hon. Member to the reply given him to a similar Question on the 18th June last.† The Board of Trade are prepared to investigate any specific complaints that the law is being infringed as suggested, but they are still without evidence warranting a general inquiry.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxiii., 1314.

Canadian Mail Routes.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the Canadian Government have appointed a Royal Commission to deal with the subject of transportation; that at the sitting of the Commission held in Sydney, Nova Scotia, during the third week of January last, evidence was produced that a 23-knot steamer could make the passage from Galway to Sydney in three days and fourteen hours; and that an experiment is to be made by means of a fast steamer during the coming summer, between Galway and Sydney or Halifax, with the view of obtaining information as to the best routes for the conveyance of His Majesty's mails over ocean; and, if so, will he state what contracts now exist, with whom and for what period of time, for the conveyance of His Majesty's mails between Great Britain and Ireland and Canada.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.)--for Lord Stanley: My right hon. friend has no information of any Commission appointed by the Canadian Government for the purpose to which the hon. Member refers, nor of any experiments to be made during next summer. The only contract which provides for a direct mail service between Great Britain, Ireland and Canada is one made by the Canadian Government with the Allan Line. He believes it has recently been decided to renew that contract for two years from August, 1904.

Avoch Harbour.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state what sum the Fishery Board for Scotland propose to provide in aid of the construction of a harbour at Avoch, Ross-shire.

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire): I understand that the Fishery Board have intimated to the Avoch Harbour Trustees that all harbour funds at their disposal have been allocated, but that they are willing to consider an application from the Avoch Harbour Trustees if it is renewed in April next.

Scottish Crofters' Act, 1886.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will consider the expediency of introducing legislation to extend the benefits of The Crofters' Act, 1886, to small tenants holding under lease in the crofting counties at the time the Act came into force.

Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am unable to make any promise of introducing legislation as suggested by the hon. Member.

Bee Keeping in Ireland.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that the instructions issued by the Department of Agriculture with respect to bee-keeping do not deal with the compulsory destruction of stocks infected with the disease of foul brood; and, if so, whether, in view of the fact that the honey produced in Ireland during the last year, for which statistics are available was 27 per cent. less than the preceding year the Department will favourably consider further representations with regard to the stamping out of this disease.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.): There is no power of compulsory destruction in the scheme. The county instructors appointed under the scheme have not, so far, experienced any difficulty in inducing owners to consent to the destruction of infected stocks when advised that such a course is necessary. The Department are advised that the wet season of 1903 sufficiently accounts for a reduction in the yield of honey in Ireland. The Department are prepared to give careful consideration to any further representations that may be made to them in regard to the disease in question.

Cork Winter Assizes—Alleged Jury Packing.

Mr. FLYNN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if his attention has been called to the proceedings at the Cork Winter Assizes, in December last, when, in the case of a prisoner, Eugene Heffernan, charged with the murder of his mother, thirty jurors were ordered to stand by by the Crown Solicitor; and, if so, will he say whether this action was taken with the sanction of the Irish law officers.

Mr. ATKINSON: The Crown Solicitor, in setting aside twenty-nine, not thirty, jurors in this case, acted in strict accordance with the directions contained in the Circular addressed to Crown Solicitors dealing with such matters, to which I have frequently referred. He was influenced in his action by reliable information which he had received from a respectable juror and from the police, that an effort would be made by the relatives of the accused through their extensive trade connections in the City of Cork to influence the jurors in the prisoner's favour.

Mr. FLYNN: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that at the recent Cork Winter Assizes, December, 1903, in connection with the trial of Connor O'Gorman on the charge of fratricide, nineteen jurors were ordered to stand by; and, if so, whether he can state what reasons, if any, were given by the Crown Solicitor for objecting to these men serving on the jury, and also, how many of the nineteen were Roman Catholics.

Mr. ATKINSON: The Crown Solicitor set aside these jurors because he had reasonable grounds for believing that, if sworn, they would not give an impartial verdict. I am not able to give any information as to the religious belief of the jurors set aside.

Mr. FLYNN: Am I to understand from the right hon. Gentleman that these proceedings have the approval of himself and the law officers of the Crown?

Mr. ATKINSON: Certainly.

Mr. FLYNN: And are we to understand that these jurors in this particular case were not to be believed, that they were perjurers?

Mr. ATKINSON: No, Sir, you are to understand nothing of the sort.

Smerwick Fishing Industry.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any steps have been taken to meet the wants of the fishermen of Smerwick, county Kerry, with regard to better pier accommodation.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Wyndham, Dover): The Congested Districts Board has already expressed its willingness to contribute towards the cost of this proposed work, if undertaken by the county council. That offer still holds good. There are no funds available from other sources for meeting the cost of the work.

Irish Magistrates and the Irish Language.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can explain under what authority Mr. Thomas McDonogh Mahony, Cahirciveen, county Kerry, has been ordered by the Lord Chancellor not to act as magistrate because he has signed warrants in Irish.

Mr. ATKINSON: At my right hon. friend's request I will reply to this Question. The Lord Chancellor ordered Mr. Thomas McDonogh not to act as a justice because he, in violation of the express provisions of a statute to which his attention had been called, persisted in signing warrants in Irish characters, and refused to give any undertaking to desist from the practice, if permitted to continue to act as a magistrate.

Mr. BOLAND: What is the particular provision?

Mr. ATKINSON: It is in Act 22, Geo. 2, Chap. 6, and it provides that all the business of the Courts in Ireland must be conducted in the English language.

Mr. BOLAND: Will the right hon. Gentleman bring in a Bill to repeal that Act, or favourably consider one if brought in from these Benches?

No answer was audible.

Irish Road Construction Surcharges.

Mr. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that several county and district councils in Ireland have been surcharged by the Local Government Board because of the construction and repair of roads on a width of less than sixteen feet, although, in reply to queries addressed them, the Board have stated that the law is not clear on the matter; and whether, seeing that, owing to the uncertainty existing on this point, and the fear of surcharge, many councils are prevented from repairing old roads on the existing width, and in view of the hardship imposed on communities residing in backward districts, steps will be taken to have it repealed.

Mr. WYNDHAM: It is undoubtedly contrary to the express provisions of the 55th Section of the Grand Jury Act, and, therefore, illegal to construct any new road of a width less than sixteen feet, and any change in the law in that respect would be most objectionable. But there is nothing illegal in the repairing of an old road of less width than sixteen feet, provided it be a public road. Whether a road is a public road or not is a mixed question of law and fact depending on many circumstances. If any county or district councils feel aggrieved by the decision of an auditor they can appeal to the Local Government Board, who are empowered to remit the surcharge on equitable grounds.

Queen's College, Belfast.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he would have any objection to lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the letter written by the President of University College, Dublin, to the Lord-Lieutenant on 11th January last, with reference to the claim of the Belfast Queen's College for additional endowment.

Mr. WYNDHAM: This letter was published in the Press, and it will be laid on the Table, together with the resolutions adopted by the Council and Corporate Body of Queen's College, Belfast, on the 4th December, on the same subject, which were also published and are referred to in the letter from the President of University College.

Military Disturbances at Limerick.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that malicious injury claims amounting to £34 are being made against the Corporation of Limerick for the breaking of plate glass windows in that city by soldiers belonging to the Liverpool Regiment; and, whether, seeing that a number of these soldiers were caught in the act, and in view of the burden inflicted on unoffending citizens in having to pay for this destruction, he will propose such Amendment of The Local Government Act, 1898, as will enable these sums to be levied on the property or pay of the offenders.

Mr. WYNDHAM: My attention has been called to the matter referred to. Up to the present the sum claimed in respect of injury shown to have been caused by soldiers is £24, not £34. Soldiers, like other persons who commit such injury, are responsible civilly to the owner for the amount of damage done. There is no special exemption in their case.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Sergeant Williamson's Trial.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that Royal Irish Constabulary courts of inquiry are not open to the Press, and that the Inspector-General published in a Dublin paper a version of the trial of Sergeant Williamson, and refused to the solicitor for the defence copies of the depositions made by the witnesses, he will arrange, before the Royal Irish Constabulary Estimates come up, that the evidence shall be made available for Members; and whether, seeing that the officers who tried the accused were, after their first finding, summoned to the Castle by the Inspector-General, and were interviewed by him there, he will state the details of the findings.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The court of inquiry held in the present case was a Departmental one and the accused, with his legal advisers, was present throughout the proceedings. There is no precedent for publishing a report of the proceedings in the manner suggested, and I see no reason for departing from the customary practice on the present occasion. The officers constituting the Court were not summoned to an interview with the Inspector-General. The accused was found guilty of six charges of fraudulently and deceitfully altering figures in public documents.

Valentia Ferry.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether steps will shortly be taken to carry out the improvements, under the Marine Works (Ireland) Act, at Valentia Ferry, county Kerry; and whether a dredger will be provided to improve the harbours at Kenmare and other ports in the West and South of Ireland.

Mr. WYNDHAM: No decision has yet been reached in reference to the projected works at Valentia. The question of providing a dredger in connection with Irish harbours, to be placed at the disposal of local authorities on loan or hire, is engaging consideration.

Cahirciveen Parish Committee.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Parish Committee scheme for the parish of Cahirciveen, county Kerry, has yet been put into operation; and, if not, can he state the cause of the delay.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The scheme, with the modifications proposed in it, will be considered by the Congested Districts Board at its meeting this week.

Irish District Lunatic Asylums.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Treasury have refused to pay for the maintenance of patients in the district lunatic asylums in Ireland committed under the orders of the Secretary of State for War and the First Lord of the Admiralty; that this refusal has been decided upon in defiance of the express words of a statute passed in the first year of the reign of His present Majesty and of a circular issued from the Irish Lunacy Office, Dublin Castle, in the early part of the year 1902; and that the circular referred to was followed by another contradicting it; and, if so, will he state who is responsible for this change; and whether he will take steps to have the law as stated in the Act, and defined by the first circular, carried out.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The earlier of the two circulars was issued in error. The revised circular of May, 1903, was issued by direction of the Irish Government acting upon the advice of the law officers. The latter circular was to the effect that lunatic sailors and soldiers who have committed no crime, but are sent to asylums by the Admiralty or War Office under special statutory authority, are not to be treated as criminal lunatics and, therefore, not to be maintained at the cost of the Exchequer. They are not so maintained in England, and the Government does not think it can be contended they should be in Ireland.

Mr. CHARLES DEVLIN: Will the right hon. Gentleman state by whose advice this circular was issued?

[No answer was returned].

Land Commission in Longford.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when it is proposed to hold another sitting of the Head Land Commission in Longford for the hearing of appeals; and will he, with a view to affecting the payment of the March rents, direct them to hold a sitting before 20th March at latest.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I referred this Question to the Land Commissioners, but so far have not received their observations. Perhaps the hon. Member will repeat the Question to-morrow.

Care of the Insane—Scottish System.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed at a conference of representatives of the Irish District Asylum Committees, on 26th November, in favour of the system of taking family care of persons of unsound mind which is practised on the Continent and Scotland; and, if so, whether he intends to propose any legislation with a view to having the system legalised in Ireland as well as England and Scotland.

MR. WYNDHAM: The resolution has been received, but I cannot give an undertaking that the Government will introduce legislation dealing with the matter during the present session.

Collum's Estate, County Fermanagh.

MR. EDWARD MITCHELL (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, in view of the fact that the tenants on the estate of Collum, a lunatic in county Fermanagh, proposed to purchase their holdings under the Land Act of 1903, and were referred by the Lord Chancellor to the receiver, Mr. M'Clintock, of Dublin, and that the receiver at once proceeded to serve ejectments on the tenants, he will state if this has been done by the authority of the Lord Chancellor.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am informed that no proposals to purchase have been sent to the receiver by the tenants on this estate.

Labourers (Ireland) Acts.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that in connection with the Land Bill of last year, the Report of Land Commissioner Mr. W. F. Bailey on the working of previous Land Purchase Acts was issued as a Parliamentary Paper, he will, in view of the promised labour legislation, place upon the Table of the House the Reports of the Local Government Board Inspectors on the operations of the existing Labourers Acts.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reports of the Board's Inspectors in respect to the Labourers Acts were made for the private information of the Board to supplement information already in its possession. For this reason, as I have already stated, they cannot be laid on the Table. Mr. Bailey's Report was made at the request of the Lord-Lieutenant, and the same objections did not apply to its publication.

MR. SHEEHAN: But why not follow the precedent of last year, having in view the great importance of this question?

MR. WYNDHAM: Because I say the information gathered was only fragmentary, and intended to supplement that already in the hands of the Local Government Board.

Irish Local Government Auditors—Qualifications.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what is the standard of qualification for appointment as Local Government Auditor; whether any examination is necessary, or whether the appointment is merely by nomination; and will he grant a Return showing the number and qualification of gentlemen appointed to this position since 1st April, 1899.

MR. WYNDHAM: Auditors, before entering upon their duties, must satisfy the Civil Service Commissioners in respect to their qualifications, which are determined by an examination in prescribed subjects. I am sending to the hon. Member a Return containing the information mentioned in the second part of the Question.

Strabane Gas Works Loan.

MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience caused by the delay of the Treasury in giving a decision as to granting a loan of £15,000 to the Strabane Urban District Council for the construction of gas works in the town of Strabane, which loan has been duly sanctioned by the Board of Works in Ireland so far back as the month of August last year, and brought under the notice of the

Treasury; and whether he will take steps to have the recommendations of the Board of Works carried into effect, so as to enable the urban district council to proceed with the construction of the gas works.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: This loan was submitted by the Board of Works for Treasury sanction on the 9th November last. The Treasury hesitated to sanction it because the figures given on behalf of the urban district council appeared to make it doubtful whether the proposal was financially a sound one from the council's point of view. It has therefore been thought necessary to refer the matter back to the council, through the Board of Works, in order that they may clearly understand the financial effect, and may then decide, after further consideration, whether they wish to proceed with the loan.

Longford Postal Arrangements.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in order to facilitate the earlier delivery of letters and parcels in Longford, he will direct that the auxiliary postmen for that purpose be placed upon the permanent staff of town letter carriers.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (for Lord STANLEY): My right hon. friend will have inquiry made on the subject.

SELECTION (UNOPPOSED BILL COMMITTEES) (PANEL).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection that they had selected the following eight Members to be the Panel to serve on Unopposed Bill Committees under Standing Order No. 109:—Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Carvill, Mr. H. D. Greene, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Mr. Mellor, Mr. Paulton, Mr. Parker Smith, and Mr. Worsley-Taylor.

Report to lie upon the Table.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee that they had selected the following six Members to be the Chairmen's Panel and to serve as Chairmen of the two Standing Committees to be appointed under Standing Order No. 49:—Mr. John Ellis, Sir Thomas Esmunde, Sir James Fergusson, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, Mr. Laurence Hardy, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILL.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS (FUNDS) BILL.

"To authorise the appropriation of the surplus Funds derived from Battersea Park towards the opening of the Mall into Charing Cross, and other Metropolitan improvements," presented by Mr. Victor Cavendish; supported by Lord Balcarres; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 55.]

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

[EIGHTH DAY.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,—*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being.'"—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said that when the debate was interrupted last night he was referring to the question of wages which had been raised by an hon. Member opposite, who had urged that the position of England in Europe was assured so far as its wealth and prosperity was concerned, as was evidenced by our standards of wages, living, and comfort. Now he would be the last to say that those standards were not high in this country. No doubt they were higher than in any other countries—except new countries which had exceptional advantages, such as the United States and our own Colonies. But there was one statement of the hon. Member he must deal with. It was that the wages of certain skilled workmen, which in 1860 were 28s. 3d., had risen to 37s. 9d. by 1890. That, no doubt, was a remarkable increase, but he wished to point out that the increase in Germany of the same period was appreciably greater, starting from a lower standard. Was it strange that the standard should have been lower in this country? These were the days when Cobden had given this country a new and great policy, we were in an extraordinary position in the matter of our manufactures, and not in a serious position in the matter of our agriculture. Cobden then looked forward to the time when England would permanently command the manufactures of the world, for he held that the repeal of the Corn Laws would not only give a great impulse to our manufactures, but would inflict so severe a shock on our rivals by giving us augmented opportunities of competition all over the world, that England would permanently maintain her position against Germany, France, and the United States. Those who held the opinion that free trade was not an unmixed blessing at all times and places had been again and again challenged because it had been said that the protectionist in America sold cheap abroad in order that he might sell dear at home. But he would like to point to the fact that America manufactured goods from raw material which she did not produce, and sold them just as cheap at home as abroad. Since 1824 there had been a tax on wool in the United States, which she had always had to import from Australia, South America, or elsewhere. Could any one suggest that the wages of workmen in the United States were low because the manufacturer sold his goods cheap abroad so as to sell dear at home? Take the case of tweeds. Why the United States, where twenty-five years ago there was no good American tweed, and only American shoddy was worn, now produced, in spite of the heavy tax on wool, tweed clothes as good and as cheap and as well made as any we produced in this country, and they were worn by 75 per cent. of the population of the States, while the workman engaged in making them got twice as much wages as the workman in this country. That seemed absurd on the face of it, but it sufficed to point out the moral he wished to be drawn from his remarks. The American workman, to begin with, was working in an area where he was absolutely secure, and the manufacturer commanded his home market. No doubt the United States had great resources in her own borders which we did not possess. We had to go abroad to purchase food, a portion of which we might still be able to produce if the policy of free trade had not pressed so heavily on the agriculture of the country. The United States had never exported so heavily as we had, neither had she imported as heavily. Her imports were £171,000,000, whilst the imports of England were £528,000,000, and her exports were £304,000,000 against our £347,000,000. But it was not reasonable to suggest that because the United States did not export so much she was necessarily poorer. The fact that her imports and exports were so well balanced showed that she was commanding her home trade. Was American-made furniture sold cheaper in England than in America?

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Certainly.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg your pardon.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg yours.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Were American shoes dearer in England than in America?

MR. FLAVIN: Certainly.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said he had studied the question.

MR. FLAVIN: And so have I.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: And my conclusion is that they are not.

MR. FLAVIN: I have worn the boots and paid for them, so I know they are.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said he had done the same. The point he wished to make was that the margin of difference was not sufficient to justify the assertion that protectionist countries sold cheap abroad in order to sell dear at home. What was the policy of Mr. Carnegie and his fellow manufacturers? Did they dump simply in order to get rid of their surplus stock—did they desire merely to make England a Cheap-jack market? No, the policy of Mr. Carnegie and the other manufacturers was first to secure the home market and to use it as a leverage by which to capture fureign markets. They kept their works going for nine months in the year in order to supply the home market, and then, instead of incurring a loss by closing for the remaining three months, and keeping their men and factories idle, they kept them running by selling the goods produced at cost price abroad. They did not sell goods cheap simply to capture the English market. They had another purpose in view. It was not the trades unions who alone secured high wages for the working men in the United States; it was the fact that the manufacturers had a settled policy, by the quantity of production, to keep their workmen employed all the year round. By the policy they adopted of selling here at cost, they were able to reduce the expenses of their establishments and to avoid the loss which would be entailed by the temporary shutting down of the works. It was not done for philanthropic motives, but it was done in order to secure regular employment for the men all the year round, and the effect on the domestic and on national life, as well as on the manufacturers themselves, was very great and good. It produced confidence and security. Let them remember that if the cart of progress was to be drawn along, and if the capital which should draw it went lame, labour alone would not draw the cart. It was the command of their home markets that ensured employment and increased wages for the working classes in the United States, and which at the same time secured the manufacturers in their position. How did we stand in the matter of our home trade? Were we satisfied that we had the absolute command of it? When he read the table of our imports and exports he could not say that the prospect was, by any means, a cheery one, He would give a few trades in which there had been a rise in imports and a fall in exports. During the last nine years the figures for the increase of imports and the decrease of exports respectively were, in the boot and shoe trade, £2,159,000 and £920,000; in woollens, £18,000,000 and £38,000,000; in furniture, £5,500,000 and £600,000; in earthenware, £2,400,000 and £15,000,000; in glass, £11,700 and £1,300,000, and in silk, £38,000,000 and £8,000,000. That was a serious state of affairs, and it was certainly not what Cobden had anticipated. Cobden looked forward to seeing the manufacturers of England commanding the trade, not only of this country, but of all others. We, however, did not expect that, as we knew perfectly well that the discovery of the great mineral resources of the United States and the Colonies had altered the course of trade with those countries. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was not the first to raise this question of the decline of British exports and the increase of British imports. Lord Rosebery raised it on the basis that if we went on—the signs were so alarming—we were bound steadily to decrease in power as a manufacturing nation. If was true that merchanting was increasing every day in this country, but manufacturing was proportionately decreasing. Moreover, our carrying trade, whilst it had increased, was slowly being competed with by Germany, and if the United States made up its mind to enter the theatre of shipping, we should probably have a bad time in the future. He altogether disputed the theory, suggested by the Cobden Club, that the fact that the amount of American shipping was insignificant as compared with British shipping was a sign of a lack of American prosperity. Why did not Americans invest in shipping? Because it was much more to their benefit to put their money into "industrials," which yielded a return of 15 or 20 per cent., than into shipping, which would bring them in 5, 7, or possibly, in some cases, 10 per cent. We, for our £528,000,000 of imports, were content to send out one-third of the amount of exports, and for the rest to pay by shipping alone. He did not suggest that England's position would be better if we had less shipping; on the contrary, he considered it to be absolutely necessary to England's future that her position in the carrying trade should be maintained. He did, however, wish to point out that thirty years ago we had the same position in the carrying trade and a better position in the manufacturing world. We had lost, on the one hand, and we had not gained proportionately on the other.

Having been challenged on the question of colonial enthusiasm in the matter of preference, and as to the offer of the Colonies, he had looked the matter up in *The Times*, and he found there had not been a single dissentient voice from the Colonies or from any public body in the Colonies. On the contrary, every Legislature in the Colonies had expressed its sympathy with the belief in the idea of preference. The New Zealand Parliament had passed a Bill on the subject. Not only had the Premier of Australia spoken in favour of the proposal, but the Leader of the Opposition in Australia, whose form of preference might differ from that of his political opponent, had said again and again—

> "I propose to reduce the taxes upon British goods by 50 per cent. Whatever Sir E. Barton will do, I will do more."

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: But he is a free-trader.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said the fact that Mr. Reid was a free-trader was a striking tribute to the argument he was addressing to the House. Sir Wilfrid Laurier also was a free-trader.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester) asked whether Mr. Reid asked for anything in return.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said he had expected that question. Mr. Reid asked for nothing in return. Moreover, he had looked the matter up in the Canadian papers, and he unhesitatingly asserted that the Leader of the Opposition in Canada had so far coincided with the opinion and the action of the Canadian Government that again and again he had spoken in favour of preference. As to the question of his hon. friend, who did not know the exigencies of politics, even in this country? It was extraordinary that this movement should have met with so little opposition in the Colonies when one considered how eager opposing Parties were to dish each other. They were told that a preference could be given to Australia only on wool. That was inaccurate. A preference on wool was not our last resort. By giving a preference on agriculture, on meat and wines, we should benefit Australia more than by a preference on wool, because although the meat and wine trade was not worth more than 60 per cent. of the pastoral trade, it employed 50 per cent. more hands, and thus affected the working classes to a greater extent.

His interest and belief in this scheme had led him to speak at greater length than he had intended. In conclusion, he could only say that he believed the future of this country depended upon a closer association and a common destiny with our Colonies. He felt that we could never retrieve the place we had lost in the industrial movement of Europe, but we could secure our position by a closer alliance with those nations which had supplied our trade, as it had declined with foreign countries. He believed that sooner or later preference would come, and so would a 10 or 20 per cent. tax upon foreign manufactured goods, in order to protect that trade which has been, and will be, for the prosperity of this country.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): The hon. Member for Gravesend, who has just made an interesting and instructive speech, is, I presume, an opponent of His Majesty's Government, because he spent one part of his speech in advocating protection, and the other in advocating colonial preference, which are both policies that the Government have distinctly renounced. When the House adjourned last night, the hon. Member was trying to show that the German workman was much better off than the English workman, although I do not think that is very relevant to the question before the House. The hon. Member has omitted that part of his argument this morning. With the official policy and declarations of the Government I, like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, am entirely in accord. We understood the President of the Board of Trade to say that a tax upon food was not within the sphere of practical politics, that the Government are opposed to colonial preference and general protection, and a 10 per cent. all-round tariff, and that their policy upon fiscal reform is freedom to negotiate, followed by retaliation if it obtains the approval and assent of Parliament. That is substantially the same as the statement made by the Prime Minister at Sheffield. It may have been a little more clearly put, but it was practically the official policy laid down at Sheffield, from which the Leader of the House has not departed in subsequent speeches. The President of the Board of Trade gave a very interesting psychological fact, which I think accounts a great deal for what has happened since. It appears that every member of the Government has got, like Faust, two souls, one is the official soul, which is retaliatory, and the other is a private, personal soul, which, in the case of most of the members of the Government is protectionist, though in one or two cases it is free-trade. This appears to account for all the vagaries which have taken place. It was the private and personal soul of the Prime Minister that prompted him to declare at Sheffield that he was in favour of reversing the fiscal policy of the last fifty years, a statement which drove the Duke of Devonshire out of the Cabinet. It was the same private and personal soul that prompted the President of the Board of Trade, on Tuesday last, to interrupt an hon. Member on this side of the House and tell the House that he wished it were possible to tax food.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) was understood to deny this statement.

Sir John Gorst.

SIR JOHN GORST: It is quite clear that it was his protectionist soul that drove my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board to make speeches against those who were the supporters of the official policy of the Government. I gather from the speech of the President of the Local Government Board, which did not contradict the speech of the President of the Board of Trade, that this official policy will be maintained until after the division has taken place. The Secretary to the Board of Trade made a strong protectionist speech, but, with great ingenuity, it was not in favour of protection, but pointed out the most effective way of retaliating, and it was a good object lesson as to how a policy of retaliation may very quickly, under certain circumstances, develop itself into a policy of protection. Although this official policy of the Government is perfectly satisfactory, there is one singular circumstance about it, and it is that none of the members of the Government outside the House of Commons support the official policy at all. Some of us try to support the official policy of the Government by showing that colonial preference is undesirable, and by attacking the system of protection, but we meet with no encouragement of any kind from the Government. I want to ask a perfectly clear and definite question of the Government, which I think they might reply to on the spot. I want to know whether hereafter those who oppose the official policy of the Government, like the hon. Member who has just sat down, who go in for protection and colonial preference, will receive the official countenance and support of Cabinet Ministers in their candidature, to the exclusion of those who really and honestly support the official policy of the Government. [OPPOSITION cries of "Answer, answer."] That is a very simple question. I am a Tory of 1866, and during all my Parliamentary career I have served under the leaders who have been free-traders—the late Mr. Disraeli, Sir Stafford Northcote, the late Marquess of Salisbury, and even the present Prime Minister, who has told us over and over again that he is a convinced free-trader. All the chiefs under whom I have served are staunch free-traders—

Lord Cross, Lord Goschen, and the Duke of Devonshire, all of them still alive. To my noble friend I would counsel patience until this tyranny be past, and I hope he will live to be the head of the united Tory Party, with sound fiscal principles.

It would be almost indecent for me to sit down without saying a few words in support of that official policy which was announced from the Treasury Bench. I understand that the Government are officially opposed to colonial preference. I think in the interests of one of the greatest possessions of the British Empire, the Empire of India, they are wise. This has been overlooked in the agitation out-of-doors, although it was mentioned by the late Secretary of State for India, and it is one which deserves the attention of both sides of this House before the fiscal question is finally settled, because India contains 300,000,000 of inhabitants who are subjects of the British Empire. Consequently India, is next to Great Britain, the greatest free market in the world. Now, the Government of India have the advantage of having—I was going to say no Parliament, but that would be scarcely respectful to this Assembly. They have the advantage of having the complete command of the services of the very greatest experts and the most experienced commercial politicians which the Government of the great Indian Empire provides. They have been advised that these colonial preferences could do little good and might do great harm to the interests of the Indian Empire. The Indian Empire has not very much to offer in the way of preference to us, and it has hardly anything which it can gain from us in return. That is the advice of the experts, and it is adopted unanimously by the Government of India. I will not trouble the House with the details of the reasons, so admirably given in a despatch, for the Government of India coming to that conclusion. But there is one danger which that Government have to fear from the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham to which I should like to be allowed to direct attention, because it is an admirable illustration of the extraordinary complexity of commercial relations, and I think it is a very good illustration of how people might do an immense amount of harm to commercial relations without ever dreaming that they were doing any mischief at all. It shows how an ignorant—I do not wish to use the word in a bad sense—it shows how an uninformed Government might put its hand into the delicate machine of commercial relations and do mischief they never thought of.

This is how the difficulty arises. India is a debtor country. It has to pay a sum of £16,000,000 per annum to Great Britain for services rendered—Army charges, stores, the diplomatic services in Persia and China, and so on; and there is the large sum that comes home as interest on the immense amount of British capital invested in India railways. They do not pay in direct exports to this country, because the trade of India is such that India takes from the United Kingdom £35,000,000 worth of our exports, which are chiefly manufactures, and we take only £21,000,000 worth of her exports, which are chiefly raw materials, articles of food and tea, so that you see, instead of there being any direct surplus of exports to Great Britain it is the other way, and the trade with Great Britain enhances the amount somehow or other she has to pay back to Great Britain. Well, how does she pay it back? She pays it through British possessions from which the imports into India are £5,000,000, while the exports are £11,000,000, and through foreign countries from which the imports into India are £12,500,000, and to which the exports from India amount to the enormous sum of £51,500,000. It is through these exports to foreign countries that India pays her £16,000,000 of debt, and the difference between imports and exports between her and Great Britain. Of course, the way in which this takes place is enormously complicated, as people may suppose, but I give the House two illustrations which will show the sort of way in which these payments take place. Of raw cotton—there is a good deal of cotton grown in India—£8,000,000 worth are exported from India. Hardly any of it comes direct to this country. Raw cotton imported by us from India only represents £370,000. We get nearly all our cotton from America. But there is a very large export of Indian cotton to Continental countries. Germany takes

£1,250,000 worth, France £480,000, Italy £807,000, and Belgium £1,856,000. In fact most of the Indian cotton, except what goes to Japan, goes to the Continental countries of Europe. This cotton is worked up by the cotton mills of France, Germany, and Belgium, and finds its way into the English market as cotton manufactures, and these are amongst the articles which the supporters of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham denounce as imports that ought to be stopped by a large import duty. India is an enormous exporter of all kinds of seeds, and amongst others of linseed. She exports altogether as much as £3,500,000 worth of seeds. We take a very good proportion of them ourselves, but £593,000 worth go to France, and £809,000 worth go to Germany. In France and Germany this linseed is made into linseed oil. There are great oil presses in Marseilles, Bremen, and Hamburg. Somehow or other the French and the Germans have superior processes of pressing, and can, therefore, supply our market with linseed oil which is cheaper and better than that we make at home. At any rate we do a large trade in linseed oil with the Continent. Partly, therefore, the sum which India must transmit to this country arrives in this way in the shape of cotton manufactures and linseed oil. I have no doubt the great Commission now sitting will severely tax these products if they can. That is a danger the Indian Government look forward to. Here they see that a small protective tariff might have a most pernicious effect on the trade of India without anybody intending it at all. I do not doubt that India would have ot find some other mode of making the transmission, but this way in which it is done is the easiest way. If you disturb this, India will have to find some other way, and she cannot find so good and cheap a way. The disturbance of this particular form of trade will put an additional burden on the already overburdened people of India. It would be a distinct disadvantage to the trade and commerce of the Indian Empire.

While I am talking about India, may I revert to what I said a moment ago, that India is the greatest open market next to Great Britain in the world, and I say you could not possibly have any better test of the respective merits of protection and free trade for the protection and promotion of foreign trade, than the way in which the different nations of the world appear in the Indian market. In the despatch to which I have referred, there is an appendix which contains a short epitome of the Paper presented to Parliament on the trade of India, and I commend this little epitome to the most earnest attention of Members on both sides of the House, and especially to Members for Lancashire constituencies. I may mention that this appendix contains a statement of the amounts of the various articles imported into India from all the different countries in the world. I shall only trouble the House with one item, and that is cotton. In India they import altogether £1,658,000 worth of cotton yarn. How much of this is from spinners in Great Britain? Of that amount, £1,575,000 worth is from Great Britain, and from the whole of the Continent of Europe and the United States there only comes £73,000 worth. In the cotton manufactures exactly the same tale is told. Of cotton manufactures they import into India £18,323,000 worth, and of these there comes from the cotton manufacturers of Great Britain in competition with the whole world—because the whole world is in the Indian market—£17,525,000 worth. The whole of the Continent and the United States, and all our competitors put together, only supply £740,000 worth. These figures will not add up, but the difference is accounted for by the fact that I have left out a little margin which is imported from British possessions, such as Singapore and Hong-Kong. Who comes next to us? Why, Italy comes next with £143,000. The United States, the terrible competitors we are so much afraid of, import £81,000 of cotton manufactures and Germany £106,000. With figures like this before you, is it not true to say that the British manufacturer practically commands the entire market, and that no other manufacturer is in it at all? And why do you command the market? You ask some of the Lancashire mill-owners. Let the hon. Member for Stalybridge ask some of his constituents why it is that they beat every nation in the world. It is because this is a free-trade country. The manufacturer can build his mill with untaxed materials, he can fill it with untaxed machinery, and he can get every one of those articles which are necessary for the manufacture of cotton in the cheapest market. He can buy his cotton in America, Egypt, and numerous other places, and every requisite for his manufacture in the cheapest market, and, therefore, he is able to undersell the American and German manufacturer whose Governments do not give him the privilege which the British manufacturer enjoys. It is said that we ought to rejoice in the prospect of lowering foreign tariffs. I wish that that prophecy might be fulfilled, but I do not think the cotton manufacturers of Lancashire would rejoice at that which would be no doubt beneficial to the world in general, for they would then lose the practical monopoly which I say they now enjoy of the Indian market, because Great Britain has been, and still is, a free-trade country. Let me recommend that argument to the consideration of the hon. Member for Stalybridge.

There is one other danger sketched out in the despatch of the Indian Government. What would happen if India itself were a protectionist country? Hitherto we have been able to maintain in India free trade, but the noble Lord the Member for Ealing said in his speech that representations were being continually made for protection in India. I know that such applications were frequently made when Lord Cross and I were at the India Office. How were these representations met? The noble Lord told us that he said —

> "We have convinced ourselves that the policy of free trade is best for the inhabitants of this country, and we are giving to the population of India the same benefits that we ourselves enjoy. But supposing India became protectionist, what could you then say to the Indian manufacturers who want protection for their native goods? How could you refuse to them the protection you are giving to the manufacturers at home."

You would not be able to maintain the present free-trade policy in India for a month. You would have a tax placed at once on your importations of cotton. Where then would your Lancashire trade be? Think of the enormous population in our Lancashire towns which is really manufacturing for the Indian market; and just think of the distress and confusion that would be entailed by a policy which deprives them of that market. I will not make a peroration, but I have thrown out some facts and arguments which the opponents of the Government ought to take into consideration before they press on the Government a change of their official policy. The silence of the President of the Board of Trade greatly alarms me. I do not know where I stand. I do not know whether the Government are really pleased at our support of their official commercial policy; but because I believe it is the best for the interests of the people of this country I shall continue to support it—even at the risk of displeasing His Majesty's Government. I promise to oppose in this House any attempt either to establish any colonial preference or to establish in this country a general protective system.

*MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): My right hon. friend below me has dealt in some detail with some proposals for fiscal reform, so far as they are likely to affect the Government of India and that country. He is alarmed, he tells us, at the silence of the President of the Board of Trade on this subject. Not having had the advantage, like my right hon. friend, of having been in the India Office myself, I think it would be more respectful to him if I leave it to some member of the Government or one familiar with the affairs of India to deal with that branch of the subject. I propose to go to the Amendment which is immediately before the House. My right hon. friend the Member for Croydon told the House yesterday afternoon that there was nothing in that Amendment from which he was able to dissent, or of which he could not approve. I am sorry to say that, differing entirely from my right hon. friend in that respect, I think there is very little in that Amendment that I am able to support. I have taken great interest in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who moved it; and I have followed with all the care and attention I have been able to give to them the various speeches which have succeeded, but I am bound to say—and I hope I say it without any offence—that I have been able to find very little in any of them either to support or establish the three main propositions which that Amendment contains. And, with the permission of the House, I desire for a few moments to examine them and to say a few words on each. What is the first proposition? It is as follows—

> "That our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers."

Conflicting declarations upon what? I presume upon the official or fiscal policies which are now before us. But the Government have expressly and repeatedly declared that there will be, and that there can be, no change in our fiscal policy during the present Parliament. And how conflicting declarations upon some future fiscal policy which may or may never come before the country [OPPOSITION laughter]—although I have very little doubt that it will, and with results which probably hon. Gentlemen opposite may not find altogether pleasant—how on earth conflicting declarations on a matter affecting another Parliament is to "impair our deliberations on the financial service of the present year," I confess I do not understand. It is not clear to me. I pass from that, which, after all, is a comparatively small matter, to the second proposition, and what is that?—

> "That the removal of protective duties has, for more than half a century, actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population."

Now, I venture to think that in that statement the right hon. Gentleman goes somewhat too far. If he had been content to say that for many years after the adoption of free trade, perhaps for a quarter of a century, that policy had been followed by these results, then I do not know that I should have had anything to say in dispute of that proposition, because undoubtedly it is the case. I make the admission; I have never questioned for a moment that for many years after the adoption of free trade there was a very remarkable and unexampled development of prosperity in the country. Those who were its authors, or at least most of them, have always been in the habit of putting that down to the credit of free trade. With great respect, there again I think they go too far and that, to a certain extent, they are mistaken, because there were a vast number of causes at that time which contributed to that development of our industries, and that great prosperity. Although I admit that undoubtedly free trade played a part, and probably an important part, in that development, I doubt very much if other causes did not play an infinitely greater part. There were all the great inventions of that time: steam, the telegraph, and other scientific discoveries. Railroads everywhere were being created, steamboats were being built, and the means of transport were being increased every year. Then there were the immense discoveries of gold in California, and later in Australia—the most fertilising agency in the world, as it has been described—causing a great expansion of the currency—a period of rising prices—giving the greatest stimulus to enterprise which the world has probably ever known. All these things, in my humble opinion, contributed to the great development and prosperity of those years in a greater degree than even free trade itself. At that time, it should also be remembered, in this country we had the start of all other nations. We had lived for many years at that time under a system of rigid protection. Our great manufactories had already been established and thoroughly equipped, which was not the case with others. I am speaking of facts which are known to everyone who has studied history. The consequence was that we were, at that time, in a position to take the fullest advantage of all those adventitious circumstances, which was not the case with other nations. We were called at that time, and rightly called, the workshop of the world. In those days we supplied foreign nations with almost everything they required; and in return we bought their food and supplies of provisions for ourselves. Cobden, no doubt, at that time thought his expectations had been realised in a greater degree than ever he had hoped for himself, and for aught I know he believed, and he had some reason for believing, that in all probability we should continue selling cotton and buying corn for an indefinite number of years to come.

Mr. Chaplin.

But after a time there came a complete change in this respect, and it arose in this way. Foreign nations became tired of always depending on us for everything in the way of manufactured goods they required, and they determined to establish workshops of their own. How did they set about it? The first thing they did was to resort to our own discarded weapon of protection as the most potent instrument they could use for the purposes of the great object they had in view. Of course we are all familiar with the statements Cobden made at that time about foreign countries all being ready to follow our example. I desire to speak with the utmost respect in every way of Cobden. He was not only a great man, but I am sure he was a perfectly sincere man, and that all he prophesied again and again on this subject he most thoroughly and absolutely believed in himself. All we say against him is that he was mistaken on this point. No man in the world could have been more completely mistaken than he was. I will not repeat his prophecies, because every one knows them. He thought at first that the moment we adopted the principle of free trade all other countries in the world would hasten to follow our example; and, if Cobden had been right, we should have arrived undoubtedly and beyond all question at the ideal which, I suppose, each of us would set before himself—certainly I for one have never wavered in that opinion—namely free exchange. But, unfortunately, Cobden in all his predictions on this point turned out to be absolutely wrong. Exactly the opposite has happened. What we have seen, for many years, is this: foreign nations, one after the other, adopting a system of protection. As a matter of fact, I believe we are the only great country left in the world which still adheres to a system of free trade; but we have not got, and never have had free trade or anything whatever approaching it. That is why I have always been careful never to pronounce myself, as I have heard so many Gentlemen in all parts of the House pronounce themselves, "a convinced free-trader," and for this simple and sufficient reason: we have not got and we have never had free trade, and there is not a single man, in my generation at all events, who is able to speak from any practical knowledge or experience of the merits, or otherwise, of that system. On the contrary, not only have other countries one and all resorted to protection, but they have adopted that system with results which in recent years are most remarkable, and of which Cobden himself never dreamt for a single moment.

Some Gentlemen in this House profess to see no cause for alarm or anxiety or disquietude in connection with the present position of our trade. They think that the Board of Trade Returns and the Blue-book which has been published absolutely demolish the case which has been put forward for fiscal reform. So far as I understand him, the Leader of the Opposition is one of them. But there are other members of his Party who do not agree with him. Only on Monday, the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment spoke of the conditions of our employment and of our trade as being such as to give cause for the gravest reflection. Another leading statesman belonging to the Party opposite made, some years ago, so striking and so remarkable a statement on this branch of the subject that I make no apology for quoting it to the House. In 1896 he told the country that year after year our Consuls and the Board of Trade warned us that we were no longer, as we once were, the undisputed mistress of the world of commerce, but that we were threatened by one formidable rival at any rate. "I mean Germany," he said. Then he pointed out that our imports of manufactured goods from Germany rose from £16,000,000 in 1883 to £21,000,000 in 1893, or an increase of 30 per cent. in ten years, and that into a country which believed it had the monopoly of supplying the world with manufactured goods. Then he went on to say "In some of our Colonies, India and Egypt, German trade had gravely menaced British trade," and, finally, he added, "Surely an inquiry might be instituted, short, practical, and exhaustive into the cause of the decline of British trade and the alarming increase of our foreign rivals." "Germany," he concluded "is engaged in an industrial war with us, and in that, I think, unless we take precautions in time, she is not unlikely to succeed." Who was the statesman who made these observations? He is the statesman who, I understand, is the latest ally of the Leader of the Opposition. I mean Lord Rosebery. That was Lord Rosebery's case in 1896. That is my case, only more so now. The experience of the years that have elapsed since then have confirmed it, and with every word Lord Rosebery said at that time, I most entirely agree. Let me support Lord Rosebery's view by a single statement from the Blue-book. I could give many, but one is sufficient. It shows two things at all events; but I am bound to say that it seems to me that the students of the Blue-book book on the other side, as far as can be judged by their speeches, have been very careful to overlook it. It shows firstly, that one of the cardinal doctrines of the Cobden Club that protection is necessarily fatal to successful competition in any industrial country, a statement endorsed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon last night, is absolutely demolished by the test of actual experience. It shows, secondly, that whereas our commercial supremacy was originally achieved under what hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite call, and what the mover of the Amendment called, "the impoverishing system of protection," we are beginning to lose that commercial supremacy under a system of free trade.

I listened to the speech of the Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Trade on Tuesday, and I desire to take this opportunity of expressing to him my most sincere congratulations on the very remarkable speech he delivered, by which he held a crowded House in rapt attention for over an hour. Like him, I desire to take, as an illustration to support my view, the Iron and Steel Trade. There is, and can be, nothing more important. Moreover, that trade is one in which, until a few years ago, we stood alone, in which we were unapproached and absolutely without a rival in the world. If hon. Gentlemen will try it by the test which is recommended in the Blue-book, what they will find is this. I take the year 1879 for this reason, because it was the year in which Bismarck abandoned free trade and resorted to protection. Hon. Gentlemen would find that the consumption of pig-iron, which is the best test of all, because all iron and steel manufactures have to pass through that stage, in 1879 in Germany was 2,216,000 tons, and in England, 6,000,000 tons. But in 1902, whereas England had increased to 8·7 million tons, Germany had increased to 8,403,000 tons. In other words this country, with a start which was immense, increased only 2,000,000 tons, whereas Germany in the same period increased 6,000,000 tons. But that is nothing to America, which, during the same time, increased her production of pig-iron from 2,700,000 tons to 17,000,000 tons; *i.e.*, an increase of 15,000,000 tons, while we had increased 2,000,000 only. I do not, however, rest my case upon America, because her natural resources are so great. Her area is so vast, and her coal and iron are often so much nearer the service than ours and so much easier to obtain. But I am not aware that Germany has any similar advantages over this country, and yet this is the result which we see under the system of protection, in the only country left that adheres to the system of free imports. We are caught and beaten by one of our protectionist rivals and outdistanced altogether by the other; and that in one of the chief and leading industries in the country. Where is this to stop? Is there no feeling of uncertainty and anxiety in this matter in the minds of hon. Members opposite. It is steel and iron to-day. It will be one of the other great industries to-morrow. I ask, with great earnestness, hon. Members of this House to consider is this a satisfactory condition of affairs?

I have only given one instance out of the many I could give because I did not wish to detain the House. Are we to sit still and do nothing, which I take to be the policy of the Opposition, in the face of these remarkable circumstances and facts which we see to-day, or are we to be moving? There is nothing in the world which surprises me so much, after giving credit to hon. Gentlemen opposite for having investigated and stated their case, as to see with what comparative indifference they regard it, and how little they seem to recognise the enormous change in the general position during the last twenty years, and the great necessity for doing something, at all events, to try and deal with the situation before it is too late. If it is to be met at all what is the remedy for it? Lord Rosebery, who does, or did appear to be alive to the gravity of the situation in 1896, thought he found both the cause and the remedy as well; though I think he was inaccurate, for in the course of the same speech he said—

> "The cause is not far to seek, for the last sixty, seventy, or eighty years Germany has fitted herself by a most perfect system of technical education to be a great industrial nation."

Nobody values the benefits of education more than I do, but when did this alarming increase begin? I beg hon. Members to consider this; curiously enough it was not until Prince Bismarck abandoned free trade and adopted the policy of protection and supplemented the advantages of education most effectually by securing for German manufacturers the undisturbed possession of their own markets. And if it was due to education alone, will any hon. or right hon. Gentleman explain to us how it is that this system of perfect education, having been in force for sixty, seventy, or eighty years, according to Lord Rosebery, did nothing to increase the prosperity of our rivals until they commenced to live under a system of protection. Let me say with regard to education, whatever may be its undoubted merits, that to suppose it is a remedy in itself is the greatest delusion in the world. Supposing it enabled you to produce your goods better and more cheaply than you ever did before; everyone knows perfectly well that the duties would be immediately raised, and your position would be worse than ever.

Now I pass from that to another branch of the subject. Others tell us, the Member for Fife, I believe, is one, that the fault lies with our manufacturers and workmen—want of enterprise in the one, of skill and industry in the other. I do not believe it, and until the contrary is proved I regard it as a libel upon both. No; there is another and a better reason for it. I have talked to men of business by the score and they all agree in this. That for succesful competition in trade, security for capital and the most effective means for cheap production are essential. Our rivals find security for capital in the possession of their home market, which is practically, to all intents and purposes, kept for them. And the secret of cheap production is large production. But for large production the first essential is that you shall have the largest possible market always open and assured to you. How do we stand in that respect as compared with our foreign rivals. They have always two markets open to them, their own, which is protected, and the market of this country, which is always open to the world, where they can compete with our own manufacturers and workmen to any extent they please. On the other hand, we have only what is left to us of our own markets by our rivals, the neutral markets of the world which are trifling, and the markets of the Colonies. It is in these industrial conditions, I am convinced, that the explanation will be found that while foreign countries under a system of protection have been increasing their production by leaps and bounds, we are caught and beaten in the race for trade, and unless some other steps are taken to avert it, we shall be beaten still worse in the future. What, then, is the remedy? There are three policies before us. One is the policy of the Opposition, which is to do nothing; the second is the policy of retaliation, which is the policy of the Government, and which, so far as it goes, is good, but it fails in two respects. It will not recover for you the markets you have lost, nor will it help you in others which are absolutely necessary to the workers of this country. Secondly, if it means anything, it means, according to the President of the Board of Trade, that in certain conditions duties will be imposed on manufactured goods. Now I remember perfectly well Mr. Gladstone's opinion on this point. He declared that nothing on earth would ever induce him to agree to protection upon manufacturers unless agriculture was included. Well, then! What remains. If these markets in place of those we have lost are vital to the interests of the workers of this country, who depend upon employment for their livelihood, where are we to look for them? Why, where should we look? Except to the Colonies, to the markets of our kith and kin beyond the seas? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, in whose speech the other night I thought I detected a note of indifference to the Colonies, said the trade of our Colonies can take care of itself, and we must dissociate ourselves from any idea of Colonial preference. I differ from the right hon. Gentleman *in toto* on this point. We often hear that no offer has been made to us by the Colonies, that there is no disposition on their part to meet us. No disposition to meet us? Why, already they voluntarily give us a preference, some of 33 per cent. others of 25 per cent. and so on, over foreign countries. And have we not had a note of warning of the very first importance upon this point? Let me read a passage from the "Summary of Proceedings" of the Conference between the Colonial Secretary and the Colonial Ministers in 1902—

> "The Colonial Ministers stated that if they could be assured that the Imperial Government . . . would grant to the food products of Canada in the United Kingdom exemption from duties now levied or hereafter imposed, they would be prepared to go further into the subject, and endeavour to give to the British manufacturer some increased advantage over his foreign competitors in the markets of Canada. . . . Meanwhile they determined to present to the Conference a Resolution affirming the principle of preferential trade and the desirability of its adoption by the Colonies, also expressing the opinion that the Government should reciprocate by granting preferential terms to the products of the Colonies in the markets of the mother country."

Then they concluded with this very significant warning—

> "If, after using every effort to bring about such a readjustment of the fiscal policy of the Empire, the Canadian Government should find that the principle of preferential trade is not acceptable to the mother country generally, or to the Colonies, then Canada should be free to take such action as might be deemed necessary in the presence of such conditions."

Surely that statement should do something to dispel the illusions of the hon. Member for Bristol—and what is the only inference we can draw from it? Why, that we cannot stand still. We must go forward, or else we shall go back; and, if we are to go forward, where else have we to look to but to our Colonies? What is the objection to this proposal? Excepting that it may lead to difficulties with the Colonies instead of to increased advantages, I have not heard what seems to me to be a single reasonable objection urged against it. Let me say why I think the balance of argument is distinctly in favour of the proposal. There are Members present who have had some experience of the Colonies. I would ask them is there anyone who has had the same experience, or is so universally recognised as the best Colonial Secretary we have ever had, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham? When my right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol, or the Leader of the Opposition, or any other distinguished Member opposite tells me that the Colonies will not do this, that, or the other; that you cannot successfully negotiate with them; that this policy, if tried, will end only in raising greater difficulties than exist at present—my answer to them one and all is that the man who is acknowledged to be the best Colonial Secretary we have ever had takes the opposite opinion, and if I have to choose between two conflicting opinions I prefer his opinion to theirs. One objection is that this policy cannot be carried out without some duties on food. Everybody knows how trifling the duties which have been proposed are.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): At present.

*Mr. CHAPLIN: I do not know what reason the right hon. Baronet has for doubting the right hon. Gentleman for West Birmingham when he distinctly states that any duties he imposes will not be high duties—that they are to be low duties, not exceeding 2s. a quarter on corn.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: Is it not a matter of certainty that they will have to be increased to carry out their object?

*Mr. CHAPLIN: That is precisely one of those differences of opinion between the ex-Colonial Secretary and hon. Gentlemen opposite in which I prefer the opinion of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham. It is often stated that the policy will raise the price of living. I deny it; and on the other hand, I affirm—and I am prepared to argue and demonstrate before any audience in the world—that if this proposal is adopted, it will result in actually reducing the cost of living, instead of increasing, to the poor. And who are the people who object to the proposal of a 2s. duty on corn? Some gentlemen, I regret to say, on my own side have even left the Government in consequence of it, and yet, one and all are men who, only two years ago not merely voted for, but most energetically supported and defended the imposition of a similar duty upon food, the only distinction being that in one case it would have increased the cost of the loaf by something less than half a farthing, while in this case it would increase the cost by something less than a whole farthing. Lord Goschen, one of the keenest opponents of this proposal, defended the imposition of the shilling duty, with consummate ability in the House of Lords, and, in the course of an admirable speech, he maintained at that time that—

> "If the duty had been 2s. the bakers would have hesitated to raise the price of bread."

It is upon this trifling charge, this imperceptible distinction, that some of my oldest and best friends, for whom I entertain the deepest regard, have thought it necessary to leave the Government of the Party with which they have been associated all their lives. And now, we know from experience that the duty imposed two years ago did not affect the price of bread in the slightest degree ["Oh!"]—Well, if you do not believe me, let me read on this point a statement made by a leader of the Labour Party who has been adopted as the Labour candidate for one of the divisions of Manchester. This statement was made on the morning before his adoption—

> "He might say that when the duty of 1s. was put on a few years ago the workers did not pay the 1s. It had been his duty to ascertain the price of bread, and he had visited shops in Hulme and Salford for that purpose on the 1st of the month, the results of which visit he sent to the Board of Trade. All the time the registration duty was on the price of bread, so far as Manchester was concerned, did not vary in the slightest degree."

If, therefore, there is nothing in the objection on the score of food, what is there that remains? There is absolutely nothing so far as I know except some minor objections urged by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol, in which he puts to me some questions; one of them was—

> "How will you be able to resist the demand for an increase in the duty however small they are at first?"

And he quoted other countries, like Germany and France, where they began with duties of 1s. and then 2s., which have now risen to 12s. But surely the answer is complete. It can never be raised except by the will of the voters themselves, and there is all the difference in the world between the conditions of the two countries, and of the voters in France and Germany and the conditions of our own country of the voters here. This argument has been raised over and over again in the country, and it has been used by men who ought to have known better. It is not conceivable that they are not aware of the reply to it. A vast number of voters in France are peasants owning little farms, they possess an enormous political influence, and it is because they wish it and desire it that those duties have been raised and are maintained as they are. But the position in those countries is exactly the opposite of what it is with us. Here the great majority of the people own no land at all. Their first requirement here is a cheap and abundant supply of food, and they have the power, which they use, and they always will be able to enforce it. The same thing holds good in Germany, though not precisely to the same extent; and in Germany there is another reason in addition—she has an enormous military frontier to defend. At any moment it is conceivable that Germany may be involved in war with some of her neighbours, and then instantly all the food which comes across her frontiers would be stopped; and therefore it is a matter of absolute military necessity that she should grow the main portion of her own food supply. But none of those conditions attach to us and it is the most futile argument to say that because duties in France and Germany began at 1s. and went up to 12s. that it is inevitable that the same thing would happen in this country. Then my right hon. friend says that I maintain that these duties will not raise the price of wheat, or the cost of living, and yet I tell the farmers they will be of help to them. The statement is not altogether accurate, for I never said they would not raise prices. What I did say was that the duties on corn would not raise the price of bread. The other duties might raise the price of food to a very trifling extent. Although they will not raise the price of bread, the duties upon corn will be, small though they are, I believe, some advantage and some help to the farmer.

The right hon. Gentleman asks me if colonial preference is to be limited to food or is it also to be extended to manufactures. The answer to that has been stated over and over again by the ex-Colonial Secretary, who says it is impossible to lay down the precise details of any arrangement for colonial preference with regard to manufactures until a mandate has been given by the country and until either he or others are in a position to begin the negotiations. My right hon. friend said—

> "But if the duties will not raise prices, will the Member for Sleaford tell me why maize and bacon are excluded?"

As regards bacon, I have never said that the price of meat may not be to a trifling extent raised; and in reply to his question upon maize, I will answer it by asking him another. Why did the right hon. Gentleman himself draw a distinction between the 1s. duty on flour and maize? The duty on maize was made less than the duty on wheat by the right hon. Gentleman, when he imposed the 1s. duty in the first instance, and it is for the same reason, I believe, that maize is excluded now. But all these things are details and are lost in the great principle which is before us, and upon that my mind is absolutely made up. When my right hon. friend asks me and others, as he did the other night from that place, to abandon and give up the policy which we have been advocating in the country, little does he know the character of the man or those who support him if he thinks or believes we would ever entertain that notion for a moment. I oppose the Amendment for the reasons I have given already, and I support the Government because their policy, so far as it goes, is good. But above all I support the views which I advocate to-night because I believe them to be absolutely necessary in the future interests of the country, and above all in the interests of the workers who depend upon employment, and because I believe them to be right. I support them because I not only believe, but I know—I am not speaking now of the House of Commons—I know they represent the feeling of that great Party in the country with which for all my life I have been connected, and, sooner or later, I am absolutely persuaded and convinced that they will ultimately triumph and prevail.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I have listened with a great deal of interest to the very able speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford, and I hope he will not think me disrespectful if I do not follow him through the arguments and figures which he has placed before the House. They are not new to us, for they have frequently been brought before the country during the autumn campaign and I think I may say they have been answered. [Cries of "No, No!"] I will confine myself to traversing one or two statements he made with regard to the growth of the German iron and steel industry as compared with our own. The right hon. Gentleman attributed the growth of Germany industrial prosperity to Bismarckian protectionism of 1879. Is he not aware that industrial prosperity advanced more rapidly under the lower duties of many years ago than during the time of Bismarck?

Mr. CHAPLIN: My impression is that a great increase took place in later years.

Mr. BRYCE: That increase occurred after the tariffs were lowered. Exports of iron and steel during the last three years have risen 20 per cent. in England, whereas the imports have been almost stationary, and the same argument applies to the woollen trade. There again there has been an increase in spite of the statements to the contrary which have so often been made. The right hon. Gentleman quoted the dictum of Mr. Gladstone to the effect that if protection is given to any manufacturing industries it must also be given to agriculture. I agree that you cannot protect the manufacturing industries without doing something for the oldest and still the greatest of all our industries. A 2s. duty on corn has been mentioned, but I have heard members of the protectionist party say that not less than 10s., 15s., or 20s. a quarter would be of any substantial use to the farmers of this country. Will the right hon. Gentleman promise that he will never ask us for more than a 2s. duty on corn? Is that the utmost limit of his desires? I believe that 2s. would only be the beginning and it would gradually mount higher and higher.

It is a very significant fact in this debate that nearly all the speeches in support of the Government have come from the protectionist Members of this House. The subject is very large and important, so large that if it were not for the exigencies of other public business we might go on discussing it—even if the discussion were confined to the other side of the House, where such difference of opinion exists—for another fortnight or three weeks. But I think there is another subject very interesting in the debate besides the great question of protection and free trade. It has been a debate largely devoted to a search for, and inquiry into, the policy of His Majesty's Government. That is what we are largely engaged in endeavouring to discover. It is not an easy question. Their policy is an evasive and elusive policy, and when it has been discovered, as some of us hope we have discovered it, it turns out to be a very small policy, infinitesimal in quantity. The policy represents a particle of radium almost invisibly small, but it does not resemble radium in this respect—it is by no means luminous. We have had three speeches from the Government. The first was that of my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade. There is no more clear thinker in the House than the President of the Board of Trade, and no one better able to express what his opinions are. I think I may venture to say that there is no one whose statements with regard to his own opinions we may except with more unqualified confidence. His speech was an encouragement to those of us who desire to see the Government come down on the free-trade side, but it was by no means a complete deliverance, because I noticed that he said he was himself not in favour of protection for Great Britain. He was careful to say that he was speaking only for himself and not for the Government, and he went so far as to say that, although he was not personally in favour of colonial preference, he hoped the time would arrive when the country would be in favour of colonial preference. That was an alarming deliverance to those who think a wish is very apt to find expression in means being taken to carry it out. When my right hon. friend calling himself a free-trader says that, I begin to fear that he and those who act with him will endeavour to accelerate the arrival of the period. The second speech was that of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade. It was just such a speech as might be delivered to the Tariff Reform League. The third speech was that of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. It was a very brilliant effort because the right hon. Gentleman, if he will allow me to say so, succeeded in attaining what is one of the rarest attitudes of an expert Parliamentarian. He made a speech and said nothing. We were really no wiser as to the policy and intentions of the Government after the right hon. Gentleman sat down. I can only suppose that he thought it the best way. For the hon. Gentleman said too much in Wiltshire and too little at Westminster. If this is the attitude in which we are still left with regard to the intentions of the Government, we may properly look at what are the broad facts of the case.

Now, what is the attitude of the Prime Minister? The Prime Minister said at Sheffield that what we wanted was a fundamental reversal of the free-trade policy of this country. He has allowed his free-trade colleagues to go out of the Cabinet. Why did he allow them to go out? We know from their deliverances that it was not on the policy of retaliation they left the Government. Then we had a significant deliverance by the Prime Minister at Manchester. He put forward that his main duty in the present crisis was to keep his Party together. He seemed to forget for the moment that he was Prime Minister of this country and to remember only that he was leader of the Conservative Party. I think that is hardly a proper attitude for a Prime Minister. He ought to feel his duty to the nation as well as his Party. He conveyed the impression that he was thinking at this crisis not of what was best for the nation, not of the duty of the Government to lay their policy before the nation, but of his duty at all hazards to keep the Conservative Party together. What conclusion does one draw from such a deliverance? That he will take the course that seems best calculated to keep his Party together, that he will watch how the Party is going, and that he will endeavour to ride in the direction that the Party is going, so that the unity of the Party may be maintained. What was the attitude of the Conservative Party? When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham launched his scheme it contained four items — colonial preference, food tax, retaliation, and the 10 per cent. duty on manufactured goods—the last of which came a little after the others. What the country has seen in the discussion during the whole of last autumn was that the food tax is not wanted except by the land-owning interest; that colonial preference has been coldly received and would not succeed if it had not been mixed up with retaliation; retaliation had been better received than colonial preference, but standing by itself it would not excite any enthusiasm at all. That which has excited enthusiasm has been the proposal of protection for manufactured goods, only qualified by the wish and the hope that it was higher than the 10 per cent. now suggested. Now, the real issue before the country is not retaliation. It is whether we are to have retaliation as defined by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham or free trade. The real force behind the whole agitation is protection. That was said with perfect candour by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sleaford. We were told yesterday by a leading Member of the Conservative Party that in the country those who refused to follow in that direction were being ostracised and boycotted. The President of the Board of Trade said that the 10 per cent. was proposed because it would bring in revenue. Is it because it would bring in revenue that it is acclaimed by those manufacturers on the mock Royal Commission, and who are sitting now to say how it should be imposed? Surely we all know and feel that the real force and interest of the manufacturers who are supporting the movement is in order that they may make gain by this tariff. It may be proper gain, that I do not discuss. We cannot possibly ignore the motive behind the movement. What is perhaps still more conclusive proof of the phenomena is that nearly all the candidates standing in support of the Government are protectionist candidates, and that in the course of their candidature they narrow down the programme with which they begin.

What is the conclusion we may reasonably draw from the attitude of the Government and their Party? I venture to think that the Government are hardly dealt with by some of their own supporters on the other side of the House. The hon. Member for Oldham in the vivacious and interesting speech he gave us yesterday attributed to them deliberately dark designs. I think he could not overrate the craft of the Government, but he underrates its weakness. It does not seem to me to be out of deliberate purpose to beguile their supporters or the country, but out of mere hesitation, that they are adopting this doubtful attitude which baffles the desire to find out what they mean. They are playing a sort of see-saw between free trade and protection, but if we look at the attitude of the Government and if we see what is happening in their Party, we may feel certain that if the reins are held so loosely as this the horse will run away with the driver. I cannot doubt, when I see how strong the passion of protection is, that unless there is a fundamental reversal of the policy of facing both ways which has distinguished the Government during the last six months they will be swept, whether they will or not, into a purely protectionist Party. The President of the Board of Trade said the Government would fight for free trade. It is a very feeble kind of fighting that they have done so far, and I hope that at any rate when the Colonial Secretary speaks he will endeavour to clear up the darkness of the position. My right hon. friend the Member for Cambridge University asked some questions, but neither the Colonial Secretary, nor any Member on the Treasury Bench rose to answer. I hope he will answer them now. It is surely not necessary that we should wait for the return of the Prime Minister to have an answer. These are not matters of Parliamentary tactics, but questions on which the mind of the Government must have been constantly fixed for the last six months, and on which we must presume that they have a policy which every one of them knows. May I repeat them to the Colonial Secretary, and perhaps he will permit me, the first time I have the pleasure of addressing him, to offer him the congratulations of many friends on this side of the House on the post he has attained in His Majesty's Government. May I venture to ask him—Will the Government not merely fight as the President of the Board of Trade says for free trade, but will they fight against protection? Will they fight against protection by repudiating protectionist candidates, where such candidates stand? Will they cease sending letters of encouragement to protectionist candidates? Will they cease to give aid and comfort to the protectionist Party? Will they declare themselves opposed in principle to colonial preference which necessarily involves the taxation of food? I will endeavour, if my right hon. friend doubts that, to show that colonial preference involves the taxation of food? These are points on which we are really entitled to have some answer from the Government, because without any answer we do not know in what direction to turn. Everyone of us on these Benches desires to support the Government against their opponents, followers of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. The Government say that protection or preference will not be in view at the next election. But will the Government tell us what will be in view at a more distant period? What gain is it to us to know that when the Government go to the next election they will be against protection and preference and only in favour of retaliation, if we also know that the great bulk of their supporters are in favour of both. Surely the Government have had sufficient time to consider this question to tell us what they think of the protectionist policy, and what is to be for the good of the country in the future beyond the next general election?

Let me come for a few moments to the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade on the subject of retaliation. Surely the argument for retaliation is the very thinnest that was ever presented to the nation. It is the very smallest and frailest barque which can carry the fortunes of a Government. What does it amount to? The idea is that we are to secure a fairer treatment for our exports by imposing, or threatening to impose, import duties on the goods of countries which have tariffs against ourselves. Of course, we can imagine a case in which retaliation might be profitable. I suppose the most orthodox economists have admitted that there might be a country to which protection might be profitable. So we can imagine a case in which retaliation might be a proper remedy. But does any case exist now? Will the Government give us a case, for it is only in that way that we can test whether retaliation can be imposed. There is a maxim that deceit lurks in generalities, and I do think that there is a good deal that leads to confusion and difficulty in those general statements in which the Government deal. They never give us a concrete case. What is it that they have in their mind? We are told that if a case of outrageous unfairness arises it may properly be dealt with by retaliatory duties. But what is outrageous and unfair? We are apt to talk as if foreign tariffs are imposed for the express purpose of injuring British trade. Is that true? Foreign tariffs are imposed for the purpose of benefiting foreign manufactures. We are free-traders because we believe that that policy is for our own interest; and it is not to injure manufacturers abroad that the duties are put on in Germany and the United States. If you say that if a tariff is so drawn and framed that it hits British goods, that it is outrageous and unfair, and that that is the test. In that case what do you say to the Colonies? There are no tariffs which have been drawn more clearly in the view that the competition of the colonial manufacturers is a competition with the British manufactures. And yet we all know that they are not drawn in a spirit of unfriendliness to us. The Colonies draw their tariffs in order to benefit their own people. There must be a strong case in order to show that there is a desire on the part of foreign Governments to benefit foreign manufactures with an unfriendly and hostile feeling against us. The President of the Board of Trade says that the Government wants the power to impose retaliatory duties against foreign countries who have high tariffs. But have they not got that already. There is nothing to prevent them coming down to the House and proposing duties which would induce foreign Governments to reduce their tariffs. I do not understand why this proposal requires a tremendous reversal of our existing policy. I believe that there is a statute that expressly provides for that, and there is nothing in our Constitutional usage to prevent it. It is quite true that Sir Robert Peel said that he had tried retaliation and gave it up. In that famous deliverance of his which marked the turning point in our commercial fiscal policy, he declared that it was only after repeated efforts to adopt the policy of retaliation that he had been obliged to give it up in despair. There is nothing to prevent the Government adopting a retaliatory policy, but they must give us a concrete case, showing the benefit that would follow. They cannot assume that they should be granted general powers, by which alone they could impose retaliatory tariffs. I say that no Government should come before Parliament and ask that they should be allowed, without approaching the House of Commons, to ask authority to impose retaliatory duties or to alter existing duties up or down. That would be to inflict an injury on private interests. Our manufacturers are entitled to submit to Parliament a case of injury done to them by foreign tariffs, and it is impossible that the Government should have the power to impose retaliatory duties on foreign goods without that information before them. The President of the Board of Trade was unfortunate in his statement of this part of the case of the Government. I cannot gather whether he contemplated that there was any case in which the Government desired to act without having first the authority of Parliament; and I wish he would clear that point up. It is a thing on which the Government must be informed before the general election, and I do not see why Parliament should not be informed of it now.

Let me take a concrete case, in order to show the difficulty of the position. There is no country whose import duties, whose high tariff, injures our trade so much as the United States. Of course, the Russian tariff is higher, but the United States is a much bigger market. It would be absurd to retaliate against any country if not against the United States. But on their own showing the Government could not retaliate against food from the United States; and they could not retaliate against raw material either. What remains? Only manufactured articles. But the manufactures we import from the United States are valued at £20,000,000, and more than one half of these are either practically raw materials or half-manufactured goods, so that there is only £8,000,000 or £10,000,000 worth of goods which it would be possible to attack. Do you suppose that retaliation on a trifle of that kind would injure the United States? The United States, with its great home market, would not care for almost any duty you would impose. She would rely on her home market, and her manufacturers, who are exceeding powerful, would not allow their protective system to be broken down by a petty thing of that sort. Therefore, you cannot hope to retaliate on their manufactures. And the case of the United States applies *à fortiori* to every other kind of retaliation. The practical objection to retaliation is that it must be either one of two things. It must be either a mere threat, not intended to be followed up by the imposition of duties. But if a mere threat, then it is a game of bluff, and the game of bluff is not creditable to a great country. We have had enough of bluff already, and it was not successful with a small country. But on the other hand, if intended to be carried out seriously, see what the cost of putting on the retaliatory duties would be. In the first place you would have a tariff war, and in that war the duties of the foreign country would be raised against you.

Trade would suffer, and the diversion of trade from its accustomed channels would entail a very heavy loss. That was the experience of Germany and Russia, and the experience of the tariff war between France and Italy proved that there was not only a direct loss to trade, but that the trade did not come back to its old channels. In neither case can it be shown that trade was substantially benefited as the result of the tariff war. Then the second result of the imposition of retaliatory duties is that you accustom our own country to a policy of protection. It sees duties put on goods not for the purposes of revenue, and it familiarises the country to the idea of protection. Not only that, but you stimulate the desire of other trades, not so favoured, for protection. You put on a duty on a particular class of goods, let us say, iron or woollen goods, and you assume that that protection is given to that particular industry alone. But other industries would ask why they should be left out in the cold, and you would have a particular and growing pressure from these other industries to have the same benefit given to them as had been given to the other industries. And then, lastly, if the policy of retaliation succeeds, and if you bring down the duties against your own country, the natural course would be to take off your own duties. But you cannot, for you would be met with the great difficulty that those who had bought land, purchased machinery, erected works, and made all preparations for carrying on their business on the basis of these duties, would turn round and complain that you had deprived them of the benefit of the duties. That is not theory, but the experience of every protectionist country in the world. It is easy to impose protective duties, but very difficult to take them off. The appetite grows with the eating. By the very process with which the Government declares they are fighting for free trade, this country would become protectionist itself.

I notice that the President of the Local Government Board argued that by putting a retaliatory duty on you would prevent dumping. I thought I noticed a little confusion in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman. Dumping is not done by foreign countries but by private persons, and retaliation will not prevent it unless the duty be high enough to keep the dumped goods out altogether. The only way in which you can prevent dumping is to dump yourselves, and that can only be done by making the home consumer pay more in order that you may be able to sell cheap abroad. Therefore, in order that you may have free trade in the rest of the world you will cease to have it yourselves. If you look abroad you will find that every country which practises retaliation is protectionist. I do not know of any free-trade country which has tried the policy of retaliation. There may be some countries that have tried it. I admit Holland is very nearly a free-trade country, and there are other countries which have such low tariffs that they are nearer free trade than protection. But it is only the countries which have high tariffs that practice retaliation. They do it with maximum and minimum tariffs, and to that we shall also be driven. It is only by having two tariff scales and shifting a country from one to the other that we can carry out a policy of retaliation. I do not deny that cases can be imagined in which a policy of retaliation may fairly be proposed; but I am sure the House of Commons will not trust that power to a protectionist Government. If we had a Government in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol was Chancellor of the Exchequer and in which the President of the Board of Trade retained his present office, I can imagine that the House of Commons might perhaps allow retaliation, although even then it would be a very dangerous experiment. But I am perfectly certain that with a Government such as we have, which contains so many avowed protectionists, it would be perfectly impossible for this House to permit retaliation. We oppose retaliation not merely because no case has been shown for it, not merely because we believe that a policy of a tariff war is a ruinous policy, but also because we believe that it would lead us straight to protection.

So much has been said on the general aspect of the question that I will not ask the House to listen to any more figures on the subject or to any disquisitions as to the effect protection would have on any particular trade or industry. But there are one or two general aspects of the question which I should like to ask the House to consider. This country having had free imports for two generations there is scarcely a man amongst us who is able to remember the old system. We nowadays can hardly realise how fortunate we have been. You want to live in a protectionist country in order to know what are the fruits of a high tariff. In comparing this country with countries which have a high tariff, I was struck by the fact that the relation of the classes to each other in this country is more friendly and more wholesome than it is in protectionist countries. There is less jealousy, less suspicion, and less of the idea that one class is making profit at the expense of another in this country than there is in countries where manufacturers or agriculturists are allowed to enrich themselves at the expense of the consumer. I think we should be doing very little service to our politics and social order if we were to give occasion for the complaints and heartburnings which would necessarily and naturally arise between classes if one class thought its interests were being sacrificed for the benefit of another class. If the price of manufactured articles increased there would be at once a demand on the part of the workmen for higher wages. In some industries it is possible wages would be increased, but in other industries, less directly concerned with production, and above all in unskilled industry, wages would not increase but the cost of living would rise; and, therefore, you would put a greater pressure on the poorest classes of the community and there would be a reiterated demand for higher wages in order to enable the poor man to meet the increased cost of living. That is to say, you would probably inaugurate an era of strife and trade disputes by the very fact that the consumer would be paying more for the necessaries of life without having higher wages. It is possible that there might be a general rise of wages over the whole field of labour; but that would take a long time to come about. If, however, there was a rise of wages in the cotton industry it would mean the discontinuance of our cotton exports in some lines of business, because the cotton trade in some of its lines is conducted on such a narrow margin of profit that if the cost of production were enhanced it would be impossible to carry it on.

There is another advantage which any one who visits a protectionist country such as the United States will perceive that we possess under our system of free imports. Any one looking at the legislation of this country would be almost surprised to notice how small a part of our daily legislation affects the pecuniary interests of individuals. Very few of our Acts of Parliament have the effect of putting money into or taking money out of the pockets of any individual, or taking money or giving it to any class or trade. We stand almost alone in that respect. In a protectionist country a large part of the legislation is occupied in making changes in the tariff which operate to the pecuniary benefit of one class or another, and the greatest interest in legislation is excited by that part of the work of the Legislature. In fact it may be said that the Legislature in a protectionist country is chiefly occupied with tariff questions. It is only now and again that the tariff is wholly changed but the subject is never at rest. The manufacturers are an organised body and are constantly at work conveying their view to the members of the Legislature and to the executive Government and pressing for tariff changes which would benefit them. This causes constant uncertainty, and a business man never knows on what basis he may have to conduct his business, as he does not know whether the tariff is to go up or down. Large business organisations are formed whose sole business is to control the Legislature. The iron men, the soft goods men, and so on, form themselves into organisations whose object is to influence the Legislature. They subscribe large funds with which they create an agitation all over the country, and when an election comes they offer funds to the Party supposed to be most in their favour, and pledge that Party to their support. At present there are comparatively few questions in which we are concerned with the pecuniary interests of individuals or of constituences, but as soon as we have a protective tariff we shall have each constituency looking at the issues to be decided, not from the point of view of the general interests of the country, but from the point of view of what it may gain or lose. That is a necessary result of a fluctuating tariff. If we have avoided all these evils, need we suppose it is because of some peculiar quality inherent in our own nature. There was a time in the 18th century when the Parliament of England had not that purity which it now has; and if we have maintained an exceptionally high level of purity in public life and legislation, may it not be partly due to the fact that we have, to quite an exceptional degree, removed all temptation, and that we have given our legislators no opportunity of serving private pecuniary interests as is so often done in many other countries. When I think of the enormous benefit it has been to us to have our Legislature free from all these disturbing and malign influences which damage public life, I cannot but regard with the greatest alarm any proposal to follow the example of other countries in which changes of tariff are common, and in which it is possible for a Government to help a particular branch of industry.

We have heard a great deal about the predictions of Cobden. There is one prediction of his to which I wish to call attention. Some of his predictions have not been realised, but the fact that a prediction has not been realised is no reason for abandoning the policy behind it. Cobden predicted that with the growth of free government the world would be more at peace. We have had free government, but the world is not at peace; but we do not abandon on that account free government. The last fifty years has been the only period in English history when we have not been at war with a great Continental Power. May we not attribute that in some degree to the fact that all the great Continental countries, and the United States also, have good reason for keeping open trade with the country which gives them the best market. I know there have been moments when peace has been in danger, and when the fact that there was a strong interest in great manufacturing countries, such as France, Germany, or the United States, to keep open trade with England was a most powerful though silent influence in the direction of peace, and it would be a great misfortune for us to lose the security for peace which our great free market gives. There is, unhappily, enough of ill feeling between nations without losing such an advantage in the direction of preserving peace.

I want to know from the Colonial Secretary if he is in favour of colonial preference, whether he contemplates that any such preference is to extend to their manufactured goods. Would the 10 per cent. proposed by the right hon. Member for Birmingham on manufactured goods apply to the Colonies as well as foreign countries. Would colonial manufactures be admitted without a duty or would it be imposed upon them. If it were imposed upon them, what became of the union with the Colonies which we are told to expect? If it is not intended to be imposed upon them, and they are recognised as being entitled to have a preference on manufactured goods as well as foodstuffs, would not such preference be more or less of a bonus and stimulus for them to manufacture against us? Canada gave her steel manufacturers a bonus which actually doubled the amount of iron and steel we received from her. In that case dumping would go on, and the Colonies would obtain advantages which they were never intended to have. I am afraid that a system of commercial treaties within the Empire may really retard that federation which the right hon. Member for Birmingham desires. There is nothing the Colonies care more about than their own fiscal freedom, and every bargain made between the mother country and a colony will be the subject of discussion in the Colonial Legislature, the question being whether the bargain is not too good for us and too bad for them. I have talked with many protectionists in France and the United States, and I never met one of them yet who did not admit that, although he thinks protection good for his own country, he believes free trade is good for England. They all say that. I suppose hon. Gentlemen believe foreign protectionists believe it to be their interest to say so. I assure them that this statement has been made to me in moments of confidence. During the last seventy years we have built up a mighty fabric of commerce and trade unknown even relatively at any other stage of the world's history, and we have done that by trusting to the British race. We have built up our trade by the energies of our own people. While our competitors were relying on high tariffs and protected markets, we have followed the course that nature has marked out for us. The policy of free imports is the only true policy for an island nation such as we are, lying as we do between the old world and new; an island people unable to provide our own food, and a people eminently fitted to undertake maritime pursuits, with the result that we do two-thirds of the commerce of the whole world. We have set an example to the world in persevering with this free-trade policy for the last sixty or seventy years, and now, as the Government desires free trade, they will do it a very bad turn by making this country protectionist. If we persevere and set an example of self-reliance and conform to economic law, it will be to our lasting honour that we have given a very powerful help to those forces of reason and justice which are making for free trade in protectionist countries.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I will first thank the right hon. Gentleman for the courtesy and kindness of his personal reference to myself; but as far as I could follow his speech the first part of it was devoted to showing that retaliation was a very small thing, a trifle in itself, while the latter was devoted to showing that it was a very serious thing [Mr. BRYCE: In its consequences], and would lead to tariff wars. You cannot have it both ways. At any rate, it was serious enough to cause the resignation of my right hon. friend the Member for Croydon.

MR. RITCHIE (Croydon): No. Really I should have thought that the explanation I gave of the reasons of my retirement would have shown my right hon. friend that retaliation was not the cause.

*MR. LYTTELTON: Yes, Sir, but my right hon. friend admitted himself, in writing, on 15th September, that—

> "Any proposal for retaliatory duties would inevitably lead to protection, and produce far greater evils than they were destined to prevent."

Mr. Bryce.

MR. RITCHIE: If my right hon. friend is going to quote the letter he had better read it all.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have read the point in the letter which I thought was relevant to the matter I had in hand.

MR. RITCHIE: If my right hon. friend will not read the whole letter I must read another paragraph of it—

> "I am in entire sympathy with the desire to unite the mother country and the Colonies more closely together, but I know of no method by which preferential treatment can be accorded to the Colonies other than that which has been advocated by the Colonial Secretary—namely, the taxation of food, which involves, as a consequence, an increase of taxation. To this policy I am opposed."

*MR. LYTTELTON: I quoted the passage on which I relied, and, with great deference to my right hon. friend, the passage just read does not appear to require any modification of my original statement. Now I wish to say with perfect frankness at the outset that I do not intend, in a debate on the Address, to discuss a scheme for preferential duties which is not part of the scheme of the present Government, and into the details of which of course I cannot enter. There were two questions asked by the right hon. Member for Cambridge University which I think were fair Questions. One was, "Will the Government support those who honestly support the Government fiscal programme?" My answer is, "The Government will support those who honestly support the Government programme." The second question was, "Will they oppose those candidates who go further than the fiscal programme of the Government in opinion, and who may be the advocates of colonial preference?" My answer is, "Yes; they will support those candidates who are in favour of the Government fiscal programme, even if their own opinions go farther than it." I hope that these two answers are at least plain. The noble Lord the Member for the Ealing Division of Middlesex appealed to those members of the Government who were going to speak after him not to go beyond the President of the Board of Trade in their utterances on this subject. I venture to think there ought to be reciprocity on the part of anyone who makes that demand. My noble friend the Member for Greenwich made a very able and eloquent speech. It would be unpardonable of me to demand relevance or materiality from most Members in a peroration, but from my noble friend I think I may do so, for he is lucid even when impassioned and he is clear though fervid. In his peroration he referred to a certain view of the Empire as a view of a gigantic profit-sharing business, and I suppose in doing that he endeavoured to cast some blame or reflection on the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. Since I have been at the Colonial Office I have been very much impressed by the business qualities of my distinguished predecessor. They are at once my envy and my despair. But I am even more impressed by the ideals and the traditions which he has left behind him. It would be a gross injustice to describe the policy of my right hon. friend as a policy which was in any sense dictated by mean and sordid ideas. I do not think my noble friend believed that that was the case; but I should like to bear testimony to the fact that there is no portion of the work of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham at the Colonial Office which does not impress me with the great traditions and the great ideals of my predecessor with regard to the Colonies and colonial policy.

With regard to colonial preference, I appeal to my friends and to my opponents not to close the door upon it. They ask us not to support it. Let me beg of them, as one who has something to do with the Colonies, not to commit themselves against it. After all, what a man of genius and great historic imagination said fifty or sixty years ago on this subject is still true. Carlyle said—

> "Our little isle is grown too narrow for us, but the world is wide enough yet. For another six thousand years England's sure markets will be among new Colonies of Englishmen in all quarters of the globe. The mother country can say, looking on her Colonies, 'Here are lands and seas, spice lands, corn lands, timber lands, overarched by zodiacs and stars, clasped by many sounding seas; wide spaces of the Maker's building fit for the cradle yet of mighty nations and their sciences and heroisms."

The tendency is, if I may say so, on the part of some speakers, to shut the door on this splendid ideal. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] I think that my noble friend the Member for Greenwich, when he spoke of profit-sharing and when he examined so minutely the balance-sheet as between the Colonies and ourselves, fell into the very error which the last speaker referred to—I mean the error of going too nicely into considerations of profit and loss and in not considering sufficiently the great ideal in question. I do not wish to argue the matter. I have said distinctly on several occasions before that I thought the future of colonial preference and its details required further discussion, cautious and deliberate discussion, before it is embarked upon, but it is no part at this time of the policy of the Government. Let me recall the actual history of the situation at the present time. Canada is ready to go even beyond the 33⅓ per cent. which she gives us. South Africa has carried out the Conference proposals made by the Customs Union. New Zealand has just passed a statute by which she gives a preference to this country sometimes double, sometimes 50 per cent., and sometimes 20 per cent. As regards the Commonwealth of Australia, according to my latest information, Mr. Deakin indicated in an interview that it was entirely erroneous for a London newspaper to say that the result of the elections was dead against Mr. Chamberlain's policy. That policy was supported by the whole of the Ministerial Party in Australia, by the majority of the Labour Party, and by an influential minority of the Opposition.

*SIR. CHARLES DILKE: Has he not since that interview pledged himself not to propose legislation in that direction?

*MR. LYTTELTON: My predecessor has endeavoured to knit closer the bonds between us and the Colonies; and since I have been in my present office I have done everything I possibly could to foster the sentiment referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen, and to obtain greater co-operation in Imperial defence, greater mutual knowledge, greater co-operation in Imperial counsel; and, inasmuch as we have got so much closer connection with the Colonies by these means, will you not regret it if you say that in the great sphere of commerce alone a closer link is to be wholly excluded? I trust that I make my position perfectly clear. Colonial preference is not a portion of the Government programme, but I do ask every hon. Member, and especially the Imperial Members of the Party opposite ["Oh, Oh!"] to pause a long time before they commit themselves to any view hostile to it. An attempt has been made, principally by the right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs and my noble friend the Member for Greenwich, to put the issue before the country as if it was the issue between protection and free trade. The right hon. Gentleman, in a passage not characterised by his usual urbanity and logical sequence of thought, accused me and Mr. Charles Booth of being protectionists. The point was whether Mr. Charles Booth and I were protectionists because we were in favour of a 5 per cent. all-round uniform duty. Is that protection? [Cries of "Yes."] If that is a protectionist view, then the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues in the late Government are surely protectionists, for they were responsible for the Government of India, and the Government of India fiscal system is a 5 per cent. all-round duty.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): The right hon. Gentleman is correct in saying that the Government at home sanctioned the imposition of a 5 per cent. duty in India, but they insisted on the imposition of a corresponding Excise duty.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I think that the Excise duty is only on one commodity—namely, cotton. Just see the looseness with which this term is used, and the absurdity of any Gentleman, however distinguished, attempting to rule out a policy by calling it what he thinks to be a bad name. If Mr. Charles Booth is a protectionist because he advocates a 5 per cent. all-round duty, then every Cabinet Minister of the last Liberal Administration is a protectionist, because they were responsible for the 5 per cent. duty in India. [Cries of "Oh!"] Right hon. Gentlemen opposite do not seem altogether satisfied with that line of reasoning. [OPPOSITION Cheers.] As they do not like a specific instance, may I give them authority in the matter? Will any right hon. Gentleman, however orthodox, refuse to accept Sir George Cornewall Lewis as an authority on fiscal matters? What did he say in 1857, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer? He quoted the words of Arthur Young—

> "If I were to define a good system of taxation, it would be that of bearing lightly on an infinite number of points and heavily on none."

And he added—

> "These opinions, though contrary to much that we hear at the present day, seem to me to be full of wisdom and to be a most practical guide in the arrangement of a system of taxation."

I think I have disposed of the point [Cries of "Oh!"] as to whether the advocacy of such a duty as the 5 per cent. all-round duty in trade entitles any fair-minded man to call the advocate a protectionist. Suppose that, having such a duty on commodities, you used it, though imposed for revenue purposes, for the purpose say, of colonial preference, does that make it a protectionist duty? [Cries of "Yes" from the FREE TRADE UNIONISTS.] I observe that the Opposition is rather more cautious than the free-food Party. If a duty is imposed for the purposes of revenue, are you debarred from using it for other purposes? [Cries of "Yes."] If so, you must say that if a tax, put on for any purpose, incidentally benefits the home producer or our colonial kinsmen, it becomes protective. That seems to me to be pushing orthodoxy to the verge of fanaticism. If I put a duty on a commodity for revenue purposes, and if I am told that I cannot use that duty for the purposes of colonial preference or in order to benefit the home producer, I venture to say that any candid-minded man would say that this is not business but asceticism. It is not rational loyalty to a doctrine; but the superstitious worship of a dogma. [Cheers and cries of "Oh!"]

There is no man in the House from whom I would more cheerfully accept banter than the right hon. Member for Montrose. I did not expect him to have read any of my speeches at Leamington, but he put one of them in the forefront of his observations. I would make this very modest demand, however, that if he dignifies any utterance of mine in that way he will first read my speech and then quote it accurately. He asked me whether I was ignorant that Kingsley and Carlyle and Ruskin were opponents of the Corn Laws. Yes, Sir, I knew that when I was at Eton. I did not quote those distinguished men as advocates of the Corn Laws. They were opposed to them as I should have been. I quoted them as enemies and assailants of the old doctrine of *laissez faire* of the Ricardian economists. I do not think that anyone who has read any of those authors will attempt to deny that they were opponents of those doctrines. The right hon. Gentleman said that "the gloomy doctrinaires" would have made short work of me. That does not much concern me, because those doctrines are as dead as their authors. What is the general principles on which free-traders act? They were laid down long ago by Adam Smith. The first was, "Give me what I want and I will give you what you want." The next is, "The merchant is not a citizen of any particular country;" and the third is that the individual, by following his own advantage, is necessarily led to benefit society. Those are the fundamental doctrines of Adam Smith, and I think I fairly represent them, and they are really the basis of the doctrine of free trade. In trade there are no obligations of patriotism, said the free-traders. From the dealings of trade must be eliminated the prejudice of country. The great wheel of commerce must revolve monotonously, no matter whom it crushes in its orbit. It is weakness and sentimentality, they think, to attempt to check the friction and loss and suffering which might result from the remorseless progress of commerce entirely uninterfered with by law. In my speech at Leamington I pointed out that that was the doctrine against which men strove for a long time, and that the various Factory Acts, which were designed to save and support the worker, were expressions of a revolt against this doctrine. The deduction to be drawn from these Acts was, I said, that you cannot abandon human beings to blind forces, and that you must keep a controlling hand upon the conditions of industry and have a regard to the physical well-being of those who are engaged in an industrial system. The underlying lesson to be learnt from this conflict of the last fifty years is expressed in that legislation—of which it will not be denied the Conservative Party were the pioneers, though the Liberal Party have fully supported and adopted the principles—which is a negation of the fundamental doctrines of Adam Smith and an affirmation of the principle that individuals cannot be left to pursue their own advantage uncontrolled by any other consideration. In other words, you must not consider merely the aggregation of wealth. You must also consider the ultimate effects upon society. What I venture to think is the corollary from those premises which I have just laid before the House is that the lesson has been thoroughly learnt in internal trade, but it is not—and this appears to me to be so astonishing—so clearly perceived in international trade. While the Legislature of this country says, on the one side, "We cannot disregard the conditions of industry, and we will not allow wealth to be produced without consideration of them," you cannot have the Legislature saying, on the other side, "We will open every port at every time to all goods produced under all conditions," and so proclaim at the same time to all the world that we have not one single weapon with which to defend the fabric that we have raised. How is it possible that those two systems can have any congruity? How is it possible that they can stand for any length of time side by side? The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean gave out of his repository of facts a list of a number of laws in foreign countries which he said were as good laws as ours.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: Yes, and some much in advance.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: Yes. My point was that the conditions of industry under which commodities were produced in England were greatly superior to those of the great protective countries abroad. I have not the slightest doubt that the conditions of industry here are much better, but I do not ask him to accept my authority; I will give him the authority of the right hon. Member for East Fife. He said—

"Talk about Germany and the wages of a protectionist country! I hope you will compare from the materials the Blue book has placed at your disposal, the wages, the standard of living, and the hours of labour of the German workmen to your own."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: The right hon. Gentleman is perpetually quoting me as if I agreed in the doctrine he is laying down. I quoted his speech on the specific point that he alleged that protective duties must be put on to compensate us for our heavy charges on manufacturers in respect of certain specific Acts, which I say are met by Acts which put heavier charges on the manufacturers abroad.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I never said a word about protective duties at all. What I pointed out was that the conditions of industry in England which had been prescribed by the Legislature caused the output of commodities here to be dearer generally than the output of commodities abroad. I said that among other features which were noticeable was the fact that conditions of labour were very much worse abroad. I will quote another authority—the right hon. Member for Montrose. He said—

> "Next, in regard to Germany, it was a fact that some 4,000,000 of workers there, or two-thirds of the whole, were returned as earning less than 15s. a week. Sixty-five per cent. of the total were earning less than £40 per annum, and 85 per cent. less than £1 a week. Did these facts show Germany to be a paradise? So far from being a paradise it was not even purgatory, but a lower state still."

That is a country which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean says, so far as I can understand him, is producing commodities under the same conditions as we produce them ourselves.

We have had in the course of this debate very frequent references again, as to what I may call almost the elementary particulars of this subject. We have had trotted out again the old idea that you can look upon the consumer as one person, and the producer as another. It cannot be too often said that in 99 per cent. of cases the producer and the consumer are the same individual. Suppose that I were a workman earning £100 a year—suppose that I were a glass-worker, and that by the advantage of buying cheap commodities my income were £20 a year better than it would be if I had to buy at a dearer price. Suppose that by the process of dumping, or any process of unfair competition, my employer's business were annihilated; no doubt it would be very convenient that I should buy my commodities at £20 a year cheaper than I could under a different system, but suppose that my inherited skill in the work I had practised were lost, and that I was unable to find employment again for a year or two, and then at an employment and under conditions in which my training would be wholly useless, is it not obvious that the money which I save from buying cheaper commodities might be too dearly gained, and that the friction and loss and suffering which was occasioned by the sweeping away of the industry might be much heavier than the gain which I have made by being a purchaser of the cheaper commodities? I see that hon. Members smile at that as if the doctrine were something new. I do not profess for a moment that it is. [Cries of "No!"] I am sure that my right hon. friend the Member for Aberdeen will at any rate admit the honoured name of Professor Henry Sidgwick as a great authority on economic matters, and I think I could show him a passage which is the foundation of what I have endeavoured to lay before the House.

The right hon. Member reminds me of his question about colonial preference, but I thought that I had answered that at the beginning of my speech. I said that in a debate on the Address I would not enter into the question of what the details of colonial preference would be, colonial preference not being part of the Government programme, but being in the future only.

There is one general observation I should like to make in conclusion. I have tried to show that the sense of the community has revolted, at any rate in internal commerce, from the extreme doctrines of individualism, but yet that a large party maintain that they should still endure in international relations. I venture to think that the obstacle to our getting free from those doctrines is the strong sense—in many ways a very good thing—of individualism which exists in this country.

A French writer has said, "Men fall often by the same qualities by which they rise." In one period individual energy may be justified, but in a world of organised and be-tariffed communities, individual energy may fail in commerce as the undisciplined valour of the Gaul failed against the legions of Cæsar. It is a rule and practice in this House that when a proposal is brought forward by which individual enterprise, authorised by Parliament, is threatened by State or rate-aided competition very special circumstances must be adduced before any such competition is permitted. That recognises to some extent the powerlessness of individual enterprise when it matches itself with State or rate-aided enterprise. At the same time we do not recognise that in international trade relations at all. When I was a member of the Royal Commission upon the Port of London we had in evidence most interesting and elaborate statements with regard to the progress made by Germany and France in their dock enterprise, and we heard how docks in those countries, elaborately equipped and aided by the municipality and the State, were by an equally elaborate system supported by State railways. This great organisation of foreign trade, which must, I think, be regarded with alarm by those who think carefully upon it, is pitted against our individual enterprise. Hon. Members well know how fine an enterprise the London dock companies were at the beginning of last century. Now they are practically unable to raise a single shilling. They have been exhausted, almost financially annihilated, among other things, by the competition of these very great State and rate-aided institutions. If foreign companies have by means of this enterprise power to strike, they have also taken upon themselves the power to defend themselves by high tariffs. It is against such a system as that hon. Members opposite say that nothing can be done—that nothing effective can be done either by retaliation or otherwise. I rejoice to be a member of the Unionist Party, which at any rate is awake to the state of affairs which prevails at the present time, and which is ready and anxious to do its best to apply a remedy.

*MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said that the position in which the House had been placed by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary was curious. Throughout the debate they had been trying to obtain from the Government a clear statement of their policy. On Monday the President of the Board of Trade said that that policy was unhesitatingly against protection, and that even after the next general election, the Government would not take up colonial preference, or carry out the policy of retaliation, except by bringing each particular case before Parliament. But the speech of the Colonial Secretary to which they had just listened was steeped from beginning to end in preference and protection. The hon. Member for Cambridge University, speaking in the name of many on his own side of the House, asked if the Government would support candidates at the next General Election whose support of the Government was limited to the policy of retaliation. The Colonial Secretary, in reply, said that the Government would do so if these candidates were supporting the Government "honestly." The right hon. Gentleman laid emphasis on the word "honestly," and that practically amounted to a charge of dishonesty against hon. Gentlemen in this House whose conduct during the past few months had been a credit to themselves and to Parliament.

*MR. LYTTELTON said that the hon. Member must not say that. He made no charge of dishonesty against any hon. Gentleman in the House.

*MR. LOUGH said that the right hon. Gentleman took no exception when he mentioned that emphasis had been laid by him on the word "honestly," but only when he put a comment upon it. A second question had been asked by the hon. Member for Cambridge University—viz., would the Government lend their support to candidates and organisations which went further and advocated a policy of preference? That was a most momentous question, and the Colonial Secretary said that the Government would give their support to candidates who advocated colonial preference. How could the President of the Board of Trade reconcile that answer with what he had said a few days ago? It was scarcely honest for the Government not to be more candid to the House and the country in giving their real opinion on this matter. The Colonial Secretary had quoted a very noble passage from Carlyle. It was a pity to bring the splendid observations of that eminent literary man into the narrow sphere of political controversy in this House. They all agreed with Carlyle that our little Isle was grown too narrow for us, but, he maintained that the defence of free trade by the Liberal Party was a powerful instrument in the hands of Providence to build up that great colonial Empire which was being placed in danger by the action of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman talked as if the country had no experience of colonial preference. Did not the right hon. Gentleman know that we had had two centuries' experience of that policy? There was not a suggestion in the speeches of the Member for West Birmingham which had not been made over and over again years before the right hon. Gentleman was born. We had had preferences on sugar and timber and all the produce of the Colonies, and these had nearly brought about the disruption of the Empire. Gradually the principles of free trade had been substituted for that policy, and the effect on the Colonies had been to unite them with the mother country in stronger bonds than any merely selfish tie. The Colonial Secretary was not well advised in trying to make Party capital out of the confidence, love, and respect which they all entertained for the Colonies. The question was whether the good feeling which now existed would not be endangered by the policy of colonial preferences. It was admitted by the Member for West Birmingham that our trade with the Colonies was growing every year. Fifty years ago our whole export trade to the Colonies was less than £20,000,000, while last year it was £110,000,000, or five times as great, and this great expanse had taken place under free trade.

AN HON. MEMBER asked whether it did not occur to the hon. Gentleman that if we refused the offer of the Colonies they would enter into an alliance with other nations.

*MR. LOUGH said he denied that there was any offer from the Colonies. Such a thing as an offer ought to be made in a distinct and formal manner, and there was none such. The proposals of the Government had, in fact, plunged the Colonies into as great a turmoil as this country. The Colonial Secretary had produced some of the most commonplace arguments in support of protection. He suggested that workmen's trade unions were an infringement of free trade; he might just as well have said that a trade union among barristers interfered with the operations of free trade. The definition of free trade for the purposes of the controversy was perfectly simple; it was that the Government should not interfere with the trade relations between this and other countries. He had never heard a more preposterous statement than that made by the Colonial Secretary that we had not a weapon left in our hands to defend our trade interests against attacks from foreign countries. Our commerce was greater than that of any other nation in the world, both per head of the population and in total volume. How was it that so serious a crisis had arisen so suddenly, and why should it have been sprung upon the country? The best summary of the case had been given by the Under-Secretary of the Board of Trade, who stated that the whole agitation rested on the one point that the exports of this country were small and unsatisfactory compared with the imports. His case rested on three statements. First, that the exports were not of sufficient quantity, second, that they were not of the right quality, and third, that they did not go to the right destination. The problem was not properly answered by dealing with special trades. No doubt it was easy to select a particular trade and prove that it had failed. Trades constantly failed and free-traders never undertook to make all trades successful. Nor when we prove that a given trade is very successful do we meet the difficulty. Neither is it necessary to quarrel with Gentlemen opposite who select some particular year for their calculations. The right answer to the argument avoids all such side issues. What, then, is the proper answer to what may be called the Birmingham policy? If he might say so very respectfully the proper answer was that there was not a word of truth in the statements which had been made. Exports were not and could not be less than imports. Perhaps the matter can be more simply explained if I trace for a moment the origin of this fallacy. The idea that exports were smaller than imports perhaps arose in the Statistical Society where a paper was once read by a distinguished man on what he called "The Excess of Imports." There could be no excess of imports. Imports were like income or wealth; there could not be too much of them, and they were all advantageous if properly used. Then the matter was carried to its second stage by a distinguished statesman who arrived in this country from the Colonies. He heard the story that the imports of the country were excessive and he crystalised the situation as follows—

> "Yes, and we pay a hundred and sixty million sovereigns every year for this excess."

That remark excited ridicule throughout the country because we had not got a hundred and sixty million sovereigns to pay and even if it had it would not have met the difficulty because they were supposed to have been paying them annually for twenty years. Therefore, according to Mr. Seddon the country would require not a hundred and sixty million sovereigns but 3,000 million sovereigns. That was all nonsense. No sovereigns went out. Our money would not be accepted by the countries which sent the imports. The third and final stage of the fallacy was reached in one of the speeches of the Member for West Birmingham, who said—

> "Suppose all industrial enterprise in this country died out, that mills were stopped, that there was no work, so that the all people were idle, and that the country's ships went to the bottom of the sea, what would happen then?"

He said —

> "Then our imports would treble and the country would have to import to the value of £1,500,000,000!

What a statement to make! Probably no greater example of absurdity had ever been reached in the domain of human error. If our exports fell away to nothing then our imports would also disappear. My argument will be assisted if I give a simple definition of what exports are. Exports consist of material and services. That definition covered every form of export. But I will be asked if the matter is so simple as this, how is it so many people should have fallen into error? The answer is because they had made an improper use of the Government Blue-book, the Statistics, Abstract, and other publications of the Board of Trade. They assumed that complete information was furnished, but the story could not be found in any such documents, nor could a Government Department have prepared it. He was not attacking the Department when he called attention to the necessary limitations of their publications. If anyone would look up the story the Department gave of trade, he would find that the destination of exports and imports was not properly set out, the ports to and from which they were shipped only were given. Thus it appeared that Holland and Belgium sent this country a great deal more produce than they actually did. The Board of Trade specially warned readers as to this inaccuracy.. But the great defect was that the Blue-book gave no account of services. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham said the best export was that which contained the least material and the most services. He would therefore, no doubt, be prepared to admit that the best export of all was that which contained no material and all services. What were those services? The first and greatest was the service of the country's shipping and that was entirely omitted from the Blue-book. There was the further service of building the ships which carried the nation's commerce to every part of the world, and that too ought to be regarded as part of the country's export. If such services were included they would not have these ridiculous statistics thrown at them. The late Colonial Secretary at Liverpool, looking at the fifty-five miles of quays in that most wonderful seaport, said—

> "I am accused of leaving out ships but I do not intend to leave them out. Our shipping is worth £90,000,000 sterling."

But he did not proceed to correct his fallacious statistics and include ships as part of the country's export. It was said during the debate that a large quantity of produce come from America and Russia and that this country sent nothing in return. This country, however, did 60 per cent. of the ocean carrying trade of America and 55 per cent. of the ocean carrying trade of Russia, and all the produce from those countries was paid for by the services which this country in that way rendered to them. Other services were enterprises carried on abroad. Those were export as much as anything else. An attempt was made to confuse the capital with the profits of such enterprises. That was not necessary. If he invested £1,000 in a Brazilian railway it might pay nothing, in which case it would not be an export; but if it paid £60 a year and if he brought that £60 back to this country in the form of coffee or wheat or other imports, then certainly it would be an export. Taking the definition of exports as given by the Member for West Birmingham, it would be found that the exports were equal to the imports and that this country sent out no money whatever. Exports might exceed imports, but it was impossible that the imports could exceed exports any more than water should ascend beyond its own level.

The second objection was that the exports were not of the right character, that there was not enough of manufacture in them. But it would be exceedingly difficult to maintain this position. What did hon. Gentlemen wish to send out? Was it more iron? or silk? or woollens? The commerce of this country had grown without any interference from the Government; the nation was exceedingly prosperous; and if exports in any given direction were increased without also increasing imports, the effect would be to displace something else. Did hon. Gentlemen opposite want to destroy the maritime supremacy of the country, or to displace British enterprises abroad? If they did they would meet with the greatest resistance. He did not believe that the House would interfere with the commercial liberty which the country had enjoyed so long. He believed the third objection was that we had too much commerce with foreign nations and not enough with the Colonies, but he had already dealt with this point and shown that our exports to the Colonies were steadily increasing, and any artificial interference with the progress of this business would tend to break up the colonial Empire altogether and endanger the colonial trade which was now in existence.

He turned for a moment to the argument of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade with reference to dumping. He did not think that this question had been fairly examined. The Member for West Birmingham had defined dumping and said that it took place when a country produced more of any commodity than it was able to consume, that then it could only get rid of the surplus by dumping it, and that Great Britain was the only country in which this dumping could take place. He had already spoken of one monstrous mistake the right hon. Gentleman had made, and he would only say now that if there could be a greater it would be the right hon. Gentleman's definition of dumping. Let the House consider it for a moment from the standpoint of a business with which he was familiar—the tea trade. Forty years ago no tea was produced within the Empire. It was all imported from foreign countries. Last year 325,000,000 lbs. of tea were grown in India and Ceylon, but the United Kingdom only consumed 250,000,000 lbs. What was done with the 75,000,000 lbs. that remained over? Why it was dumped. He had never heard anything so thoughtless as the statements with reference to this great branch of business. If dumping were a crime there was no nation in the world that committed it for such a long period as the British nation. It would be impossible to adopt any new principle with regard to dumping in a one-sided manner. If dumping were bad then this country's dumping abroad should be stopped; but if it were interfered with the country would get into difficulties of which hon. Gentlemen had no conception. We dumped 20,000,000 tons of coal abroad every year. We dumped our cottons, our woollens, our iron. We had done it for generations. According to the ex-Colonial Secretary dumping occurred when the country produced more than it could consume. Was the production, then, of every nation to cease when her own wants were supplied? Would France have to consume all the wines she produced? Were the fruit and spices of the East all to be consumed in the countries which produced them? Were the carpets of Persia all to be used in that country? All such suggestions were the foolish utterances of men totally unacquainted with trade. It was hardly an exaggeration to say that dumping was the foundation of English commerce, the palladium of our business freedom, and the man who interfered with it would be an enemy to his country.

He would now turn to the policy of retaliation which the Prime Minister had adopted. It had been stated that foreign nations had treated us with outrageous unfairness in raising up a wall of hostile tariffs against us, from which great injury had fallen on our commerce, but he would observe that there were two distinct features in the commercial ideas of foreign countries. In the first place the country which shut out our goods by tariff still wanted to trade with us, but they put on a high tariff to exclude some particular goods of ours. In the second place they only treated us in the same way that they treated every other country. And why should they not do that? If a country had the power why should it not shut out whatever goods it pleased? What was the effect of a high wall of tariff? The effect was that it oppressed their own people, and did not do us any harm, because whatever goods the foreign country sent over here they must accept payment for them in some other kind of goods from us. Their walls of tariff, then, only limited the power of selection on the part of their own people, and compelled them to take payment from us through some of the narrow channels which their governments still left open, which were more profitable to us than what they would select if the wider field had not been closed. The merchants of this country were not such fools as the Government supposed, they were able to protect their own interests and to secure that whatever the limitations protective systems might impose, profitable bargains were always made with the foreigner. Free trade was the best weapon to fight hostile tariffs. This weapon had served them well in the past, and if they stuck to it now it would serve them well in the future. Retaliation was the thin end of the wedge, and its adoption would inevitably lead to the broad system of protection. Let us examine the single experiment in retaliation which the Government have made. Nearly every Member of the Government who had spoken had mentioned the Sugar Convention as a good illustration of their successful interference with "dumping," and as an example of retaliation. The Sugar Convention Bill was an Act shaped on the ideas of the late Colonial Secretary. It had only been in operation some five months, and how had it effected already the consumption of sugar? Between 1902 and 1903 the consumption of sugar had fallen by 10 per cent. Sugar was the raw material of a good many commercial enterprises, and the fact that one-tenth of that trade had been destroyed by the action of the Government was an example of the folly into which the House had wandered. The Sugar Convention Bill was passed for the sake of the Colonies, and they were told that the effect of the measure would be that the export of sugar from the West Indies would be doubled and the decline of the industries of those islands would be arrested. As a matter of fact, in the year in which the Act had been carried into law the export of sugar from the West Indies was less than the previous year, for in 1902 the total was 1,200,000 cwts., whilst in 1903 the total was 700,000 cwts. Therefore they had not secured the end which they had been striving to obtain. They voted £250,000 as a free gift to the sugar industry, to keep it going until the Convention came into operation. What ought they to pay now when the Act had come into operation, and when they had given, what might prove, a final blow to the sugar industry of the West Indies? The great triumph of the Convention was to be the abolition of those noxious bounties which had depreciated the price of sugar below the cost of production. The moment the bounties ceased sugar was to advance 5s. per cwt., and the Government had adopted this policy regardless of the blow it would have given to British trade if their calculations had been correct. But what happened? The price of sugar had not advanced when the bounties were abolished, thus proving that their nature and effect had been entirely misconceived, and the whole enterprise, which culminated in the Sugar Convention Act, was a huge fatality. In the debate last year on this question the President of the Board of Trade said that if they gave protection to raw and refined sugar they would secure protection for sugared goods, and he said that if the Commission declared that sugared goods were not to be protected in the same way the Government would take immediate action when Parliament met. When the Commission met they stated that sugared goods were not in the same position, and refused the confectioners any protection, and this had struck a very severe blow at the confectionery industries of this country. This simple illustration was a proof that this House ought to hesitate before making any further experiment in the same direction.

There was one other aspect of this question of protection and free trade. They were too apt to forget what an important country Ireland was, and how deeply she was interested in those great experiments. The people of Ireland were suffering from the high price of sugar, and they were paying between £400,000 and £500,000 a year in extra taxation owing to the imposition of the sugar tax some two or three years since. Whatever they did in regard to these matters in this country Ireland had to bear her share of any loss or any mistakes they made. Looking back on the last century they could see the effect of both the policies on that unhappy country. Under fifty years of protection Ireland endured the greatest famine in her history. Then followed fifty years of free trade, during which her industries had been ruined and her population reduced to half, and now there was the keenest political discontent throughout the country. The fact was that whatever this Parliament did it could do no good to Ireland. Still, there was a standpoint from which hon. Members from Ireland could regard this question. Free trade meant fiscal freedom, but the idea of Colonial preference or any Imperial zollverein would lead us in an opposite direction. It was quite in accordance with the principles of free trade that Ireland should have the right to put on her own taxes, as the Channel Islands did. Ireland suffered very much under the 1s. corn duty, and, without saying that Ireland was very deeply interested in the fiscal question, he ventured to say that British protection offered no more advantages to Ireland than British free trade. On the contrary, the principles of free trade were more likely to be advantageous to Ireland than protection.

The concluding paragraph of this Amendment referred to the blessings of free trade. They were divided into three parts, which had been laid down by all the great apostles of free trade. In the first place the Government should not interfere with trade; in the second place the resources of the State should be found by direct taxation; and in the third place there should be strict economy in the services of the State. By direct taxation the burden could be laid fairly upon the rich, as well as the poor. The disadvantage of protection was that an undue proportion was pressed out of those who could least afford it. They had been told that foreign countries had adopted protection, and they had done it because it was a good means of wringing a large sum out of the people without knowing exactly how it was paid. Under free trade they saw how taxation was paid. The Government had failed in all three respects. They were the most extravagant Government the country had ever known; they relieved direct taxation instead of indirect taxation; and now they were trying to give the deadliest blow of all to the country by interfering with its commercial freedom. He appealed to free-traders opposite to stick to the principles which they had fought for in such a gallant manner and he was quite sure if they did this that victory would crown their efforts.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign—*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and

Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well being."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside) said the question under discussion was so large that it was difficult to know where to begin, and, judging by the experience of previous speakers, it was equally difficult to know where to end. He would deal first of all with an argument which had been advanced in the course of the debate to the effect that if we changed our fiscal system we should discourage the efforts of those who in foreign countries were advocating the policy of free trade. Exactly the contrary had been urged in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, which argued that it was the bad example of Germany which encouraged the present movement in England, and pleaded for a commercial treaty with England. With the statistics of the prosperity of Germany before them, however, it was manifest that such an argument must fall flat with the readers of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. He had examined the trade statistics of Russia, Germany, Italy, Holland, France, and Belgium, and, taking the figures for 1890 and 1902, he found that in every case, with the solitary exception of Russia, those countries had increased their trade with us in manufactured goods, and we had decreased our trade with them. Taking 1890 and 1902, the first and last years for which the figures were available, he found that Germany in 1890 sent us £9,500,000 of manufactured goods, and we sent them £16,000,000; in 1902 they sent us £16,000,000, and we sent them £16,500,000, or a balance against us of £6,000,000. In the same way, between the same years the trade with Italy showed a balance against us of £1,250,000; with Holland (mostly German through trade), £6,750,000; with France, £7,250,000; with Belgium £7,750,000; and with the United States £20,000,000; or a total balance against us with these six countries of no less than £49,000,000. It was perfectly clear that with these facts before them all the wisdom of the professors would not avail with the people of Germany against the actual experience of their traders and merchants. The only means by which we could induce them to treat us more liberally was to play the same game. This fact showed the difference between ethics and economics; in ethics it was wrong to do evil that good might come, but in economics the only way to bring about true free trade was to indulge freely in retaliation.

So far as the productive character of a country was lessened, so far did it lose something of that energy and virility whereby alone it had been made and would continue to be great. An illustration of the truth of this statement was seen in the contrast between a manufacturing town and a watering-place, the one a town of producers and the other a town of consumers. Everyone connected with towns of that description would recognise that in the one there was an energy, corporate and individual, which was lacking in the other. Although the agencies of the distribution of wealth might be multiplied, still there was something inseparable from the productive character that we should be sorry to part with in our national life. He did not for a moment say that we had come yet to be a country of consumers, but there were ominous tendencies in that direction. He had seen statistics of employment, divided into industries, in which the numbers employed had decreased within late years, those in which the numbers employed had not increased in proportion to the population, and those which showed an increase in proportion to the population. The first category included agricultural labourers, clockmakers, hemp and jute makers, lead miners, silk workers, tin miners, tin-plate goods makers, and zinc workers; the second included chemical manufacturers, coal miners, dress industry, glass manufacturers, and textile fabrics; while the only trades included in the third category were books, prints and maps; engine and machine makers, fitters and boiler makers; food, lodging, tobacco, and drink; and houses, furniture, decoration, and building. These facts were somewhat significant. Those in the book trade were engaged in a strictly protected industry; machine makers largely made that which would subserve and increase industrial development abroad; boiler makers had great difficulty in exporting, owing to the bulk and shape of their products; those engaged in the industries connected with food and drink obviously could not export to any great extent; and the houses and building trades were protected by the circumstances of their occupation from the competitive importation of ready-made goods. Therefore, according to those statistics, of the actually productive staple industries of the country there was not one in which an increase was shown. And that must be the natural consequence when a home industry had neither the market at home to itself nor the free entrance to foreign markets, for the greater the flow of imports the less must be the employment at home.

No Member would wish as an ideal that we should be a nation of consumers only. As to the diplomatic aspect of the question, it would probably be admitted that when diplomacy was stripped of its conventional *finesse* it resolved itself into inducements or threats. In many instances the questions of difference between nations, while not of first-rate importance, were still of great importance to large sections of the community, and in such cases how could we proceed? What inducements had we to offer? To enter into an alliance, with its accompanying risks, for the sake of a purely trade advantage was not worth the game. To offer territory was to part with real property in exchange for a very doubtful and contingent advantage. The offer of cash down would not be tolerated by any Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it would be an inducement to every nation in the world to blackmail us. We could not offer trade advantages, as we had given them away already. Having, then, no inducements to offer, could we offer threats? To go to war for an ordinary trade advantage would be simply wicked and immoral. We could do nothing without the power of retaliation, which at present we did not possess. He would not confine this argument merely to cases of commercial advantage; it could be applied to questions of international importance not necessarily or exclusively connected with trade.

In our difference years ago with Portugal an allusion to Oporto wine would have had a potent effect; the Newfoundland Fisheries dispute might have been ended by a reference to champagne and silks; and there were conceivable circumstances in which mineral oil might be of considerable diplomatic service. But how should this power of retaliation be exercised? Statements had been made to the effect that it would be used only after Parliament had been consulted in each case. That was good as far as it went, but he would like to go further. The procedure on a Finance Bill or a Convention Bill was no more than the rest of the British Constitution—a good fighting machine. Just as in case of national emergency he would give the Executive Government power to raise and apply money without the previous consent of Parliament, so he would pass a general statute giving the Executive Government the power, within certain limits, to retaliate on its own responsibility, subject to the judgment of Parliament afterwards, against any country that treated us unfairly. In Germany the Government had not general or universal powers, but a restricted power of increasing or diminishing tariffs, which was subject to the judgment, not of the Reichstag, but of the Bundesrath only. When a country like Germany possessed such a power, surely we ought to allow our Government the use of a weapon equally prompt and effective, and not trust merely to the wisdom of this somewhat garrulous assembly. ["Oh!"]. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose had recently stated that the advocates of reform in this matter were acting on pure hypotheses. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that in Sheffield there was no hypothesis whatever about the matter. There was real and sore distress, partly accounted for by the fact that there had been some delay in the Government orders for armour-plate —a point to which he hoped the Civil Lord to the Admiralty would give some attention—but more largely due to circumstances which nothing but economic change could touch. It must necessarily be so when shafting made by his constituents ceased to find a market at the Tyne ports, because Germany by its cartel system was able to sell the same article at £3 per unit less. There was no sin in dumping itself. It was a perfectly legitimate commercial operation. But as a matter of business, if one side played at it the other should also. His ideal was that dumping should be stopped on both sides, but if we could not get an entrance into foreign markets we ought at least to keep command of our own. If he might venture a criticism on the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, he did not think his right hon. friend had quite explained how he would harmonise the conflicting claims of the revenue and the retaliatory tariff. Looked at simply for the purposes of revenue, the tariff would not be effective for retaliation against dumping; and, on the other hand, in the conceivable case of retaliating against all the world, next to no revenue would be brought in. That was a difficulty which deserved attention. His suggestion would be that the Government should put the highest revenue tax on foreign manufactured goods their experts advised; they would then have their revenue and machinery. Having their revenue and machinery they should then add, in case of necessity, duties on any particular articles in accordance with the needs of fiscal warfare. In reply to the objection that they would never know what revenue they were likely to get, he would say that they should calculate their revenue well within the mark and let the balance go to the sinking fund. But then this question arose: the policy of the Government was to open foreign markets; how would that affect industries which do not export, particularly agriculture? From the policy of negotiation and retaliation he did not think agriculture or other non-exporting industries could gain. Would it gain under the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham? If, as was said in the case of the corn duty, the first shilling did not count, the only advantage to be secured was in the second shilling, and he did not think the addition of a shilling to the price of corn would make the difference between prosperity and depression. Therefore, as at present formulated, neither proposal met the difficulty. He thought the way out of the difficulty was indicated by Lord Salisbury some years, ago when he stated that exporting industries were suffering from foreign tariffs, while non-exporting industries were suffering from a home excise in the shape of rates. In the one case the remedy was to get rid of foreign tariffs, and in the other to reduce the rates.

Some critics had attacked the Government for proposing a revolution in the fiscal policy of the country. Although he disagreed with this he ventured to think that the proposals of the Government were not a small or insignificant part of the policy of fiscal reform. The proposals of the Government were good in themselves, and might be advocated and put into operation quite apart from any further measures. He remembered that during the discussions on the Finance Bill of 1902, he ventured to put forward views on fiscal policy which had since become more fashionable than they then were; for he found fault with it because it contained no retaliatory proposals. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen was kind enough to say that he had given a lucid exposition of exploded fallacies. He presumed the right hon. Gentleman still thought them fallacies but he must recognise that whether fallacies or not they had still considerable detonating power. The change had been such that nobody two years ago would have ventured to predict.

A good deal had been said against the attitude of the Prime Minister on this question. For his personal defence he needed no one but himself; but as a matter of speculation it was interesting to know what other course his critics would have had him take. Was he to anathematise the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham and all his works? If so, he would have been unfair to his own convictions, because he went with the right hon. Gentleman at least half the way. Was he to accept the new policy wholesale, and make it his own? If so, he would have been open to the charge of committing his Party, unprepared and unsuspicious, to a revolution of which no man could see the end. Was he, again, to resign his post and acknowledge himself overcome by the stress of the situation? If so, he would have been false to the trust which a united Party had unanimously committed to him a year before. Another course was possible to him, to accept the necessity for fiscal change, to determine the time and the measure of its application, according to a sense of what was practicable for Parliament and expedient for the State, and to hold together his Party for work, for reform, and for conservation in other regions of no less importance than the fiscal sphere. This the Prime Minister had done, and, in so doing, he believed he would be followed by the very great majority of his supporters with a loyalty which difficulties and calumny would make the more staunch and the more enduring.

The Government had been asked not only to declare their policy but also the actual details and methods by which they wished to carry their policy out. It had been said that it would not be very long before they had a General Election, and therefore he presumed that the Opposition also had a policy. What did they propose in regard to education? He did not know whether the solitary representative of the Opposition Front Bench would like a little cross-examination upon that. [Cries of "Yes," and an HON. MEMBER, There is only one on the Government Bench.] The Opposition ought to be prepared to state how they would carry out a reform in the financial system of the country. Would the hon. Member in charge of the Front Opposition Bench be prepared to stand a cross-examination as to how they proposed to carry out their education policy? Did they propose to restore the School Boards, buy up the Voluntary Schools, or take them over without paying for them, and give secular instruction in all schools? His point was that the questions he had just put to the Opposition were no more unreasonable than the questions put to the Government as to how they were going to carry out their proposals in regard to fiscal reform. He feared that some of his friends forget that forty years passed from the time when first an agitation for free trade sprung up till the time when it was consummated under the treaty of 1860. They had to deal with what to many Englishmen had become a religion, and they could not drive religious convictions, even though they be based on ancient superstition. But that the change must come, and that it need not be feared, he was equally convinced. People talked sometimes as though, before free trade, England was a poor country of mean account; but our shipping supremacy was created by the Navigation Act of a Republican Government, our wealth (according to Sir R. Giffen) trebled between 1750 and 1800, and our credit, under another fiscal system, brought us triumphant through the strain of the great wars. It was true that by the middle of the last century the old system had done its work and could no longer stand; but the success of that which followed was aided by a rare combination of events and sentiment with which it became associated in the public mind, or the results of which it usurped in the popular tradition. It was synchronous with great discoveries of gold and a marvellous development of applied science. Again, it represented triumph over the landed interest, and the landed interest was not popular in the towns. Those who opposed it had opposed the Reform Bill, and it was therefore associated with democratic principles, a conjunction which all subsequent experience had shown to be fortuitous. Above all, the age in which it was passed was an age of illusions. Peace, brotherhood, the reduction of armaments, the decay of national sentiment, and rivalries were looked on as the natural fruit of diffused knowledge and extended communications. Now racial hatreds are everywhere stimulated, national rivalries are more bitter than before, armaments are multiplied on every hand. For our material defences they had learned their lesson. He trusted that in the economic sphere as well they would recognise the truth, that if we wanted peace we must be prepared for war.

*SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said the junior hon. Member for Oldham, whose speech gave so much pleasure to all who heard it, gave credit to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham for courage and belief. No man in this House failed to recognise the courage of the right hon. Gentleman, and they gave him full credit for belief in his own doctrines. He, however, had come to the conclusion that there was but little foundation for that belief, and he had arrived at this decision after reading the ex-Colonial Secretary's speeches and criticisms upon them. The familiar case of the tin-plate trade had been blown into atoms, upon the highest possible authority, by Sir John Jones Jenkins, who had shown that in 1902 the tinplate trade showed the largest amount of business ever known in the history of the trade. Sir John Jones Jenkins explained that it was only the old-fashioned tin-plate works which were at a standstill, and that in the United States the rise in the price of tin-plates caused by the tariff had cost them so much that it would have paid the country better to have paid the cost of those works and pensioned all the work-people off at full wages. The right hon. Gentleman had also told them that the average price of wheat in the ten years following the repeal of the Corn Laws was higher than the average price of the three preceding years. This self-appointed teacher was not aware that the Act of 1846 decreed that the new duty should not come into operation until February, 1849. Therefore he took the years 1847 to 1856, as the ten years following repeal, including two years under the old duties and two years at 70s. a quarter, during the Crimean War. Again the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham told his audience at Newcastle-on-Tyne that the alkali trade of that neighbourhood had been ruined by foreign competition. This trade was carried on by two methods, one employing sulphur, and the other ammonia, both invented in France in 1808. After many experiments it was then decided that the sulphur process was the best, because sulphur was the more easy to obtain. This process was rapidly developed in England and many fortunes were made by it. In 1861, however, a distinguished Belgian started again the ammonia process, and after experimenting with it for ten years he succeeded with his process and in 1873 made 2,600 tons of alkali. The process thereafter underwent an enormous development, with the result that last year the amount of alkali produced by it had risen to 1,610,000 tons, while the total output of the sulphur process, the one worked at Newcastle, declined, during the same period from 525,000 tons to 150,000 tons. Was that due to foreign competition? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham did not know even the A B C of this trade, and to attempt, by legislation, to stop such a process was like trying to legislate against last year's rain. He had come to the conclusion that the Member for West Birmingham was not a safe guide with regard to the position of certain specific trades. What were really the reasons why some trades were languishing in this country? One of the reasons was that the works in which the business was carried on were old-fashioned. There were trades which were seriously injured (he had no hesitation in saying in the presence of friends of his who represented organised labour), by the old-fashioned ways of some of the trades unions. Just as the plant in some works was old-fashioned, so the trades unions were old-fashioned if they limited the out-put and drove hard bargains with employers as to new designs, if they unduly limited the number of apprentices, or limited mechanical appliances.

Before they descended to such a method as protective duties, at least let the employers and the employed meet together in a friendly fashion and set their house in order. He was an employer in the wire trade, one sympathetically but mistakenly dealt with by the Member for West Birmingham, and he knew that it was suffering from a lack of courage on the part of the employers and consideration on the part of the employees. He hoped that before long employers and employed would meet together in that trade also to see if anything could be done to the mutual advantage of both. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham said that under a system of protection they would have greater steadiness of employment. The right hon. Gentleman had proved the contrary by his own statements. What was it that had produced trouble in the tinplate trade but an import duty—not a duty imposed in this country but in another. Impose duties in this country and they would produce violent charges just as duties imposed in another country had done. The first imposition of a tariff, and every change in a tariff, brought upon one trade or another some derangement. The steadiness of employment was less in every protected country than in our own. He had spoken of one cause why some of our trades were languishing, but there was another known as "rule of thumb" management.

He had heard of a woollen mill in Yorkshire, where on one floor the foreman had unlimited power of ordering a certain chemical, while the foreman on the floor below had unlimited power of ordering another chemical which counteracted the one above. The same traveller sold both. Not one of the directors knew why either chemicals was used. He remembered having a conversation with a soap manufacturer, a customer of his own. He coaxed the customer to tell him how much soap he had turned out in the previous six months and found that only one-third of the alkali supplied had gone out of his factory in the shape of soap. He recommended him to find out where the other two-thirds had gone. That gentleman discovered that it had gone down a sewer through a broken pipe. That was one instance of "rule of thumb." His own firm once got a claim from a glassmaker, who said that his glass was ruined by the amount of sulphur in the alkali sold to him. The hon. Member knew there was no sulphur in the alkali, and he paid a visit to the glassworks. He succeeded in getting a sample of baryta which was being used there, and he sent it to the public analyst of Newcastle-on-Tyne for analysis. It was found to be sulphate of baryte, instead of carbonate of baryta, as it should have been. Hence those tears. Naturally no more was heard of the claim.

Sir John Brunner.

Reference had been made in the course of the debate to the making of electrical machinery. It was the fashion now to be in favour of scientific education, but it was not so twenty years ago. A great blow came then upon the trade of making electrical machinery. By the Electric Lighting Act of 1882, any person who established an electric lighting installation in a town was bound, at the end of twenty-one years, to hand it over to the authorities of the town without any addition to the price for good-will or prospective profit. No business man in his senses, undertaking a new and risky business, would trade on such terms. The author of the Act was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Only a fortnight ago he heard of a case which afforded an illustration of how English trade got behind. It had been behind, but it was recovering. An Englishman, resident in one of the British colonies, found in the neighbourhood of his factory a plant which was likely to to produce a new dye. He sent a specimen to a correspondent in England, and that correspondent sent it to the Colonial Institute, with the view of ascertaining whether anything could be made of it. The authorities of the Institute said they never examined anything except for the Colonial Office. The English correspondent sent the specimen to a well-known firm of chemical manufacturers in Germany, the firm which was now threatening India with the absolute loss of the trade in indigo. They produced a new dye from it and that dye had been registered in the joint names of the German company and the English correspondent. The House remembered very well how, not long ago, a number of deaths were caused from the drinking of beer containing arsenic. In a trial just finished the names of two firms had been mentioned—one of whom made sulphuric acid containing arsenic and the other used the acid in making glucose for brewers. That trial had brought to light an appalling ignorance on the part of these firms, which was a shame to the chemical trade. He was glad that the English firm who manufactured sulphuric acid should have been excused from any allegation of fraud, but their ignorance was absolutely appalling.

The causes of slackness I have spoken of are all removable causes. As showing the disadvantages of the protective system the hon. Member mentioned the case of an American inventor who introduced into England a machine by which matches were made without the intervention of hand labour from the time the blocks of wood were put in until they came out as finished matches. In England, matchmaking by that process was now a most prosperous trade, and the company was paying large dividends. The same machine was tried in Germany. It could only be used with a particularly soft wood, and none suitable was to be found within the limits of the Zollverein. The duty on the wood introduced from other quarters was so high that it was absolutely impossible to make the matches in Germany. He could give another illustration from the soap trade in Canada. His friend, Mr. Lever, had a soap factory in the colony, and he wanted to use cotton seed oil for making soap. All soap materials there were duty free, but cotton seed oil was not on the list. The other soap manufacturers did not want to use cotton seed oil and they took measures to prevent it being put on the list. That was an example of the lobbying that took place under protection.

The noble Lord, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs said that a free trade Government could do nothing for trade. Those who thought so were totally mistaken. The United States, 100 years ago, determined that the improvement of harbours and rivers should not be left to the locality, and should not be left undone because of the poverty of a locality. One Government in Europe after another had done great things to help trade, and in a thoroughly wholesome fashion, by reducing the cost of the internal transit of goods, the cost of the receipt of goods at ports, and the cost of loading. They were told that no practical recommendation came from the Opposition side; he submitted this one to his own leaders. The fruitful cause of protective duties was extravagant expenditure. He threw back in the teeth of any man the imputation that he was a Little Englander.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) said the hon. Baronet who had just sat down had shown clearly from practical experience how very much greater were the influences of scientific invention and co-operation between employers and employed, and other factors, than the factor of import duties upon trade. In that matter he struck at the root of the question which was agitating the country and the House as to whether, after all, import duties could help us in any way whatever. He was sure that hon. Members, free traders or free importers, were grateful to the Secretary for the Colonies for the speech he had made that day. The right hon. Gentlemen said, suppose you place an import duty of 5 or 10 per cent. for revenue purposes and you find, incidentally, it has a helping effect on the home producer or to the Colonies, are you to say it is a protective duty and you are to have none of it? He ventured to say, Yes. The Colonial Secretary had described free traders as being fanatics and ascetics in this cause. Frankly, he confessed that he was a fanatic or an ascetic, because he believed that any tax which had a protective effect was a tax which this country would do wisely to forswear. He had been impelled to the belief that protective taxes, whether small or large, whether involving colonial preference or not, contained so great and manifold evils that he for one would never be a party to their imposition. [OPPOSITION cheers.] Although the holding of this belief might drive him from the ranks of the Conservative Party, still he adhered to that decision. Anyone who proposed to take the grave step of voting against the Government ought to give some reason why he held this faith so strongly. He had already stated his objection to agree to a tax which would help the home producer, although imposed for revenue only. He cited the case of the working man who lived under the two systems. The working man at present went to a shop to buy sugar and other articles. He was aware that he was spending 6d. more than he need spend if there were no taxes at all. But the working man said to himself, "I know that the Army and Navy are necessary, and I am willing to pay my share." Under the system suggested by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham the working man, in buying his necessaries, would be aware, not only that he was paying 6d. more, but he would now say, "A portion of the 6d. goes towards the Army and the Navy, but a portion also goes to provide Messrs. Jones and Robinson, the owners of the factory, with more money to employ more footmen and drink more champagne." And the working man would speak the absolute truth.

He agreed that the economic loss of wealth to the people of the country was very slight, because much of the money gained by the manufacturer would be distributed among his workpeople, but no one could deny that the man who paid protective taxes had a definite grievance. No one would also deny that the system under which we lived did produce a greater degree of social content than prevailed in any other country; and though he believed that while the economic loss suffered by protection was greatly exaggerated by free trade speakers, yet the social evils of protection had received nothing like sufficient attention. A country which had adopted free trade and reverted to protective duties, however small, must do one of two things. It must either transfer the people to great countries with illimitable resources, like America, or it must have a military despotism such as prevailed on the Continent. He might be wrong in that belief, but at least it was a belief by greater authorities than himself. Taxes could not in any case be a source of wealth, and experience had proved that they could not transfer wealth from one country to another by putting on taxes. As countries could not tax one another, a Government had then to consider in what way they should put a tax on the people of their own country, on which class, and for the benefit of what other class. Now they came to the crux of the case, and the cause of all the agitation in the country. Were they going so to put on their taxes that part of them should be taken out of the pockets of the producers and the consumers, and put partly into the coffers of the State and partly into the pockets of another class of consumers and producers, or were they going to continue the principle under which we had lived for the last sixty years, that money taken out of the pockets of the general public should go straight into the coffers of the State? He for one adhered to the view that it was wiser to stick to the plan of taxation for revenue purposes only, and he would ask his right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary whether he believed it possible to pledge his Government that they would, under no circumstances, except for purely temporary and combative purposes, impose any restrictive duties of any sort or kind on foreign manufactures?

*MR. LYTTELTON: The policy of retaliation does not prescribe the imposition of import duties on any class of commodities except for defensive purposes.

MAJOR SEELY said he was glad to hear from his right hon. friend a definite pledge that it was no part of the policy of His Majesty's Government, that they had no intention now, nor at any future time, before or after any election, to put import duties of any sort or kind, except as a purely temporary expedient, upon foreign manufactured goods.

*MR. LYTTELTON: My hon. and gallant friend has no right, after asking a question and receiving an answer, to make a speech, and put into my answer that which it did not contain.

MAJOR SEELY said he was sorry if he had misinterpreted his right hon. friend's view, but the matter was of so much importance, for it really embodied the whole question at issue. Might he ask him what was the position of His Majesty's Government? [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] It was apparent that His Majesty's Government could not possibly give that pledge, because their supporters had practically unanimously applauded every speech, every statement, of the Secretary to the Board of Trade when he pointed out that the imports of certain classes of foreign goods had deprived the working classes of £5,000,000 of wages. He excepted from this remark those who had remained firm to their free trade principles, although many had been half driven from them by some leaders of the Party, and many others had been misled. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had said that it was possible by a system of import duties to give 300,000 poor families in this country, who had been deprived of their work by the importation of foreign goods, 30s. a week. If there was one germ of truth in it, what an illimitable hope it held out to all these people who were struggling on the verge of poverty, and who thought that they saw by this method a relief from all their troubles! The true division was between those who believed that the exclusion of imports would, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham contended, give wealth to those who had no wealth, and employment to those who sought it, and could not find it, and those who, like himself, held that that was an idle dream. He asked his right hon. friend whether the Government would pledge themselves to the view that it was idle and absurd to suppose that relief from all their troubles could be obtained by import duties, and he could get no answer. He did not blame the Colonial Secretary, but from his right hon. friend's speech, and from that of the Secretary to the Board of Trade, it could be seen that they did believe that relief from the troubles of the poor was to be found in the imposition of import duties and taxes. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had deluded himself and the people of this country, with the best and most patriotic motives no doubt, into the belief that relief would come from taxation, then they must oppose his proposals by every means in their power, so that other greater reforms might not be swept aside, and so that bitter disappointment might not render our people more miserable than before. If it were true that any relief from suffering could be obtained from the imposition of import duties, then for Heaven's sake let the Government come forward with it at once. Let the Secretary to the Board of Trade, who had told them that £5,000,000 were abstracted from the pockets of Englishmen, stand forward at once like a man and say that he and his colleagues would put an end to these sorrows and troubles. He honestly believed that the hon. Gentleman sincerely believed it; but the hon. Gentleman could not say so—and why not? In order to keep the Party together! He did not wish to say anything unkind, but he could not be a party to trifling with the deep feelings that had been aroused, and honestly aroused, on both sides in this matter. He was firmly convinced that all this protectionist talk was nothing but folly and an idle dream. For his own part no talk of retaliation, or of holding the Party together, would induce him to support a Party which held that idle dream, and he would unhesitatingly vote and would urge upon his friends not to doubt for a moment, but to vote also for the Amendment, which represented their opinions of the truth.

*MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick) said that there was no section of the House which felt more deeply than those who agreed with the opinions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham the loss from which the House suffered by his absence from this debate. They felt how much that absence prejudiced the cause in which they were interested. But there was one thing they thoroughly appreciated, and that was the generous sympathy which the House had shown for the cause of that absence, and the friends of the right hon. Gentlemen would not soon or lightly forget the deep and true feeling which inspired the phrases of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose when he informed the House of the cause of the absence of the opponent and friend with whom he had hoped to cross swords in this great arena. Such words leave a mark, not to be obliterated by the dints or the dust of the keenest party controversy. They had heard a very striking speech from the Colonial Secretary, with every word of which he thoroughly agreed. As one of his earliest friends in this House, he hoped he would be permitted to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on that speech, which showed to the world what his friends had long known, how fit he was to be the occupant of the great office he now held. But there was another speech upon which a vast deal of emphasis had been laid by those opposed to the Government on that side of the House and on this, and that was the speech of the President of the Board of Trade. Those who were opposed to the Government were inclined to take that speech as a final and permanent definite declaration of policy, but to his mind it was nothing of the kind. He took it simply as an interim report—an explanation of the present policy of the Government, together with the personal opinions of the right hon. Gentleman who spoke it. The President of the Board of Trade had rightly declined to state the future policy of the Government, and he quoted as an unanswerable precedent the action of Mr. Gladstone. In due time and at a future time the policy of the Government would be put before the country, and it would be on higher authority—the authority of the Prime Minister himself, who, with all respect to the President of the Board of Trade, was a higher authority than he was. He must say that he could not accept the system of successive General Elections which had been expounded by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. That was taking a great deal too many bites to the cherry. It was not in the power of anyone to say what the issues at the next General Election would be. These issues would form themselves, and no declaration now could hinder the Prime Minister or the Party from going to the country on the larger policy of Imperial consolidation, and preference to the Colonies if and when it seemed expedient to them to do so. The Prime Minister very rightly in his speech at Sheffield reserved his freedom on that point, and they, his followers, declined to take any limitation on that except from himself. It seemed to him that the line which the President of the Board of Trade had taken was a false line, it was open to attack from the free trade side and it was open to an acceptance which was just as damaging. It admitted too much, and reminded him of the excuse of the servant girl who, when an unfortunate baby appeared, said "Please, sir, it was only a very little one." That was an excuse which would not carry any weight. In view of the declaration of the President of the Board of Trade, what became of the great Sheffield speech of the Prime Minister and the solemn questions which were asked in it? The Prime Minister said—

> "The second question I will imagine put to me is this—'Do you desire to reverse the fiscal tradition, to alter fundamentally the fiscal tradition which has prevailed during the last two generations?' Yes, I do. I propose to alter that tradition by asking the people of this country to reverse, to annul, to delete altogether from their book of maxims of public conduct the doctrine that you must never put on taxation except for revenue purposes."

Mr. Parker Smith.

Then as to liberty of negotiation the Prime Minister said—

> "Will the remedy you propose be complete? It will not be complete even if tried in its integrity, because the country will not tolerate the taxation of food."

Was the whole answer to these questions to be that the Government wished to have the power, after obtaining the concurrence of the House of Commons, to use retaliation? That was not enough, as the outcome of such a speech. Mountains would have been in labour and have brought forth a very small mouse indeed. If the principle of freedom of negotiation were accepted, as it appeared to be on that side of the House, he asked why not proceed with it at once? It was said by the ultra-fiscal purists that retaliation was impossible, that it might lead to a tariff war. Of course it might, but so might any diplomatic negotiation lead to war, and it was the business of diplomatists to avoid that. The same was true in regard to fiscal negotiation. He denied the assertion that it made no difference in negotiating treaties, whether we had a power of retaliation or not. He would like to read an extract on this point from Mr. Morley's "Life of Cobden." In defending the policy of the French Treaty of 1860, Mr. Morley said—

> "It is absurd to quarrel with the treaties because they do not sound in time with the verbal jingle of an abstract dogma. It is beside the mark to meet the advantages gained by the international action of commercial treaties by the formula 'Take care of your imports and your exports will take care of themselves.' The decisive consideration is that we can only procure imports from other countries on the cheapest possible terms upon the condition that producers in those countries are able to receive our exports on the cheapest possible terms. Foreign producers can only do this on condition that their Governments can be induced to lower hostile tariffs; and foreign Governments are only able, or choose to believe that they are only able, to lower tariffs in face of the strength of the protected interests by means of a commercial treaty."

He wished to give a further instance. He met the other day a gentleman who was concerned in drawing up the McKinley Tariff, who gave him a most graphic description of proceedings when that tariff was being drawn up. Article after article was discussed by the Tariff Committee, and the amount of duty to be imposed upon it. On one article the expert adviser of the Committee said "Be careful; remember 90 per cent. of this article comes from Germany; put on a low tariff." A low tariff was accordingly imposed. On another article it was said "Three-fourths of these goods come from France; you must not put the duty too high, for France can meet you." The duty was fixed accordingly. Another article came forward, when it was said "Oh, this article comes from England, do what you like with it." That was the style in which foreign countries dealt with a country which could not defend itself. There was another instance, and it was contained in the Blue-book on India issued the other day. In this Blue-book the views of the Government of India on the question of preferential tariffs were set forth and they stated that so far as they could see at present such a policy would not suit them. But they gave a variety of cases in which the Government policy, the policy of negotiation, had actually been used in India, and where the tariff used as a weapon against foreign countries in tariff negotiations had been of immediate and great value to the people of India.

The right hon. Baronet the Member for Northumberland (Berwick) had challenged them to cite a single instance in which the power of retaliation had been used with satisfactory results. Well, he would give them some from this Blue-book. In the year 1900 France proposed to submit imports from India to the higher or general tariff. More recently Russia threatened to raise her already exorbitant duty on Indian tea following the passing of the Sugar Convention Bill. In the former case the Indian Government were able, by the grant of a small tariff concession in favour of vinegar and copperas, to secure most-favoured-nation treatment, and to escape the almost penal enhancement to which their coffee and pepper would otherwise have been subject. In the Russian case the Government of India advised the Secretary of State that they would be prepared to impose a differential duty on Russian petroleum. "In both cases," it was stated in the Blue-book, "negotiation was rendered possible by the fact that India possesses an import tariff," and was ready in case of need to differentiate against the goods of other countries, the Governments of which assumed a hostile attitude.

THE MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian): What had they lost in Ceylon over the Russian case?

*MR. PARKER SMITH: Ceylon has nothing in the world to do with it.

THE MASTER OF ELIBANK: But what have the planters lost?

*MR. PARKER SMITH objected to these irrelevant interruptions. He was stating the case of India, and was proving from the Blue-book which had been quoted from by the other side on points favourable to them, that the Government of India had in the last few years reaped advantage from the very policy which the Home Government were claiming liberty to use, and which it had been asserted by hon. Members opposite it could not under any possible circumstances be of advantage to any Government to have. Indeed the Indian Government declared that in their opinion a greater freedom of policy would be attended by beneficial results, for they went on to say that if Japan were made to understand that the Indian Government were free when necessary to differentiate against foreign countries it would be possible to get better terms from the Japanese Government than had hitherto been the case. Thus they had three concrete instances of the advantages gained by the possession of these additional powers. But there was a great deal more beyond. He frankly confessed that it seemed to him there was no line of demarcation in this matter. Once accept the principle of using tariff for other purposes than revenue only and a great many other things must follow.

It was said long ago by Adam Smith that defence was more important than opulence. Now-a-days there were many things more important than opulence, and we wanted freedom to use the tariff in order to obtain them. The country would be asked for a full and deliberate mandate to use the tariff for political purposes, to obtain employment and a higher class of employment for the people, and to draw the parts of the Empire closer together—to bring the Colonies into closer union with ourselves. This undoubtedly meant preference, a duty on manufactures, a general tariff, a tax on food. He was not afraid of going with these views to the country when the country had had time fully to understand them. There were of course many difficulties to be faced, and some of them had been stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol. Much elaborate negotiation would be involved, much adjustment in favour of one Colony or another corresponding to what the Colonies were willing to give us. The right hon. Gentleman had asked would it be a fair bargain to allow colonial imports to come here free while our exports were taxed. But how did that differ from the present condition of affairs? Only in so far as that was the state of things with foreign countries as well as with the Colonies. They can all send their goods here free while we on our part had to pay duties on those we sent them. The worst that could be argued against the proposal for preference, then, was that the Colonies would be in the same position as foreign countries were in. He regretted that the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had minimised unduly the capacity and willingness of our Colonies to meet us, but if after all we could not make a bargain with them we should be very much as we were. Free trade within the Empire—which was what we were hoping for in the future—might be far out of reach now; but was not the path to a union of that kind through closer arrangements with the Colonies? The influence of the Zollverein on German unity had not been sufficiently appreciated by the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich who did not appear to realise all that it had to do in leading up to the Union of the German Empire. German historians and economists placed great stress upon it and upon the public spirit of Prussia in entering into agreements with the smaller scattered States—separated not by the sea which united but by the land which divided—and in standing without scruple the great pecuniary loss thereby involved for a long time, they held that these bold sacrifices and this Fiscal Policy led up to the consolidation of the German Empire. Two other parallels were quoted by the noble Lord—the cases of the Union with Scotland and Ireland—and he drew from them the conclusion that in these matters fiscal interest counted for very little. He himself took an opposite view. The Union with Scotland took place in 1707, and at the time there was a strong feeling against it which was only overcome by the fact that the Union meant prosperity and fiscal advantage to Scotland. What better witness could they have of that than Sir Walter Scott, who, by the mouth of Bailie Nicol Jarvie describes how the strong feeling against the Union was overcome when it was discovered that by admission to the West Indian and Virginian trade Scotland gained wealth, prosperity, and happiness. That was the manner in which cordiality was created between the two countries. But how was it that with regard to Ireland the exact contrary was the case? There the Union was brought about on political grounds—grounds absolutely sufficient as he thought—but unfortunately England's fiscal policy proved absolutely destructive to the material interests of Ireland. No one would deny that the policy of free trade, however advantageous to England, was ruinous to Ireland in the middle half of the last century, and he feared that the fact that adversity instead of prosperity to Ireland being the result of that financial policy was responsible for the continuance till the present day of the feeling against the Union. Had the Union made Ireland financially prosperous in the same way as it did Scotland, the feeling against it would assuredly have died out by now.

Another argument which had been brought forward was in connection with the old Corn Laws. But nobody in their senses wanted to go back to the Corn Law policy of sixty years ago. Those Corn Laws were an absolute and hopeless blunder. That view was held by the most scientific protectionists, the German school, who had put the theory on a sound basis. But the Corn Laws were but a small and unimportant factor in the condition of the country. The real contest in the free trade controversy of sixty years ago lay between the manufacturing interest and the agricultural interest; and it was political passion that had given an exaggerated importance to the Corn Laws. They were perfectly unnecessary and led to extravagant prices in bad times without keeping the prices steady in good years, when they were inclined to fall too low. Cobden, in 1842, said the Free Trade movement was a middle-class agitation. He complained that the intelligent mechanics stood aloof, and the Chartists were hostile and suspicious. It was the great capitalist class who formed the basis of the anti-Corn Law movement, because they felt that their order was at stake. It was a false idea altogether that the growth of this country in the last fifty years was owing solely to free trade, confined to those whose knowledge of history is only derived from political books and pamphlets. People forget that in the period immediately preceding steam had come into general use and that there had been an absolute change in our whole system of commerce. Adam Smith writing not much more than a century ago told them how in those days it took six weeks to carry a load of four tons by road from Edinburgh to London and back, while it took an equal period to take 200 tons the same distance by sea. Since then there had been an enormous and unparalled extension. Adam Smith told them also that the growth of population constituted the most decisive mark of a country's prosperity. Well, in the first half of the nineteenth century the population of Great Britain increased faster than it had ever done either before or since. In the forty years from 1800 to 1841—a period which the right hon. Gentleman opposite said was one absolutely miserable and wretched, the population of the United Kingdom increased by 65 per cent., and in the forty years 1851 to 1891—he left out the period of the potato famine—the increase was only 38 per cent. If they left Ireland out of consideration, and if they took Great Britain alone the increase in the first forty years was 70 per cent. and in the second period 60 per cent. Those were the days when the doctrine of *laisser faire* prevailed in all directions, growth was chaotic, and vast towns were springing up while there were not in existence sanitary or factory laws. It was the novels of the period that gave the truer picture of the state of the country. They had been referred by Mr. Morley to novels, and especially to those of Mr. Disraeli and Mrs. Gaskell. Let them read those and they would find that the most burning questions of that day, were not as to the dear loaf. They would remember the case of the old lady in "Sybil" who, when told she needed the cheap loaf, replied that the difficulty was she had no money to buy it with. The grievances dwelt upon were in connection with the Truck system and the repeated strikes, and they arose, too, from the wild and uncontrolled action of trades unions, as well as from the loss of employment from time to time, owing to the uncertain condition of trade. In "Sybil" the worst grievance is put thus—

> "We don't see enough of our young Queen's head, for we are not paid in money but in waistcoats."

That was also the kind of grievance described by Mrs. Gaskell, who had an intimate acquaintance with the condition of the people of Manchester. The distress during the period of the corn laws was caused not so much by the high price of bread as by the reaction from the war and the distress which followed on it, and by the rotten poor law which existed at the time and which encouraged men to believe they could prosper as well without as with employment. Then, too, there was the change going on from the staple agricultural condition to the industrial state of civilisation. Everybody was entering into fresh employment under conditions that were absolutely chaotic. These changes in the social system meant friction and much suffering, and of that they had an illustration in connection with the west of Scotland. The thriving textile industry of that district failed and was gradually transferred to Lancashire and other parts of the country. The great mineral industries sprang up to take its place, but the change which occurred during the time that it was going on led to very great distress. But was it fair or honest to exploit those memories of old bitterness and to pretend that a duty less than a tenth of the amount of the old corn tax could have in the slightest degree the effect which the old tax had. It was the old story of giving a dog a bad name and hanging him. But it was just as unfair to give oneself a good name when it was not deserved. That seemed to him to be what the Free Food League was doing. They were using a name which was entirely foreign to their doctrines, principles and operations, and which was absolutely incorrect in itself and calculated to mislead. They were trading under a fraudulent name.

That seemed to him to be beyond the legitimate sphere of political warfare. When it was pointed out to the Duke of Devonshire he admitted that the name might be incorrect and somewhat misleading, but that it did not matter. He himself did not think that that was an adequate way of dealing with such a misrepresentation. The Free Food League meant that food was to be had free. To be accurate the name of the League should be "The Free From Protective Taxes Food League." There was no justification in using a name which was liable to misunderstanding, and to which the persons using it had no right.

The President of the Board of Trade gave it as his personal view that it would not be wise for the country to adopt the new fiscal policy. That might or might not be true at the present time, but he did not consider that the right hon. Gentleman gave any strong reason in support of his contention. He said that the effect of protection would practically be to put a tax on the consumer for the benefit of the producer. He himself did not consider that protection could be justified when it imposed a tax on the consumer for the benefit of the producer; but that it was to be justified when it imposed a tax for the benefit of the country at large. The best and soundest form of protection was protection by which no money was raised at all. Take the case of carpets in the United States. Before the McKinley Tariff there was a very large export of carpets to the United States. The McKinley Tariff put on a very heavy duty, with the result that a certain kind of carpet ceased to be imported into the United States. What happened? According to the arguments of hon. Gentlemen opposite the price of carpets ought to have gone up, and the consumers should have suffered; but the price did not rise at all; it remained exactly the same. The only difference was that the carpets were made in the United States instead of in Scotland, and that the workmen in the United States, as well as the manufacturers, had the whole benefit instead of the Scottish manufacturer and Scottish workman. That was an example of successful protection which increased employment to the benefit of the country at large. He thought hon. Gentlemen who differed from them on the question, should at least give them the credit for being concerned for the interests of the country at large, not for the interests of individual industries. It was not well for hon. Gentlemen to assume that all the virtue was on their own side if they wanted to understand what really was the position of their opponents. The view taken by the free importers was the view of those English political economists who thought only of the interests of the individuals composing the nation, and who assumed that what was good for the individual would be necessarily good for the nation as a whole. That did not follow at all. The view entertained in Germany and other countries where the principle of protection obtained was, that the interests of the nation were to be considered in preference to those of the individual, that if employment were encouraged it would be a general advantage to the country, and that by protection fresh employment was created, from which further wealth and prosperity followed both for the nation and for its individual members. There were two kinds of imports, namely, the labour causing imports and the labour displacing imports. All countries welcomed imports that caused labour, but imports which displaced labour were on a different footing altogether, and did harm to the country which imported them. The additional cheapness gained was small, but the loss in employment was very great. That was the only reasonable view to take. The English school of economists assumed that fresh employment could always be found if labour were displaced by imports, but that was a mere assumption, though it was the fundamental postulate upon which the whole structure of this reasoning depended. At present there was great difficulty in various directions in finding fresh employment. It was not contended that the country was ruined already, but it was contended that other countries were progressing more rapidly than this country, and they asked the people of this country to consider whether a doctrine of economy, which was good and right in a different state of conditions when this country had an overwhelming predominance as a manufacturing country, should apply now, when this country was being left behind by several foreign rivals. It was because the change was taking place more and more rapidly that it seemed to him that the time had arrived to reconsider the old doctrine and take thought as to whether free trade, which was a right policy when this country was the strongest in the world, remained a right policy now, when this country was becoming weaker than foreign countries. He hoped that when the time for a General Election came the country would be able to arrive at a right and wise decision.

MR. BELL (Derby), said that Labour Members had not taken very much part in this important debate. During the whole of this week the speeches on both sides of the House had been of a very practical character, and, whether for or against the Amendment, had been entirely in favour of the working-man's interest. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade in his speech the other day, said that Mr. Cobden complained that the labour leaders took no part in the movement for free trade. It seemed singular that at present the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham also complained that the labour leaders took no part in this question. As far as his memory served him from reading the history of the trades unions, there were not in the days of Cobden what they now recognised as trades union leaders, and it would have been rather difficult for Cobden to have had the support of the trades union leaders when there were none. The hon. Member who had just spoken also referred to the trades unions in 1842, and to their wild action as being responsible for many of the difficulties of those days. He understood, however, that the trades unions were not in existence in reality until 1871, and any such unions as might have existed during the time of Cobden and during the years the hon. Member referred to were simply spontaneous combinations of workmen who felt themselves oppressed by employers. What did really suprise him was that the objects that both sections in this question had in view was the interest of the British workman. Those who wanted to tax his food wanted to do it in his interest. Those who wanted to maintain the present position, so far as the fiscal question was concerned, likewise desired it in the workman's interest. He had no doubt that when they came to scrutinise the division list they should find that those gentlemen who went into the Lobby on Monday in order to show their practical sympathy with the working man and the working man's interest, by taxing their food and other commodities, would be the same people as would be found in the Division Lobby on Tuesday in order to support the importation of Chinese labour into South Africa—and this in the interest also of the British workman. He certainly felt unable to reconcile the two positions. Even granting their contention, for the sake of argument, that protection would find them more employment, surely to take Chinese labour into South Africa, thus depriving the British workman of employment, could not also be to his interest. It had been said that the trades unionists of this country were not against the proposals—both the official and the unofficial policy of the Government—now before the country. Here, at any rate, he voiced the unanimous opinion of the few labour men they had in this House; and whilst Members who had spoken might say that they were speaking in the name of the working classes of this country—whilst perhaps they might admit that they were, for they were in this House by the support and co-operation of the working classes—at any rate, the direct voice of the working man had not been heard before now. At the outset the Trades Union Congress, which was the highest authority in this country—at any rate of the organised workmen—had proclaimed practically unanimously against the proposals which were now submitted for their consideration. And in spite of what had been stated from the Treasury Bench by the various Ministers of the Cabinet, they still maintained that the real object in view was the taxation of food whenever the opportunity was convenient, and as far as the organised section of labour was concerned they meant to resist it for all they were worth. He was grateful for the few complimentary references which the right hon. Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire made to one of his esteemed friends, Mr. Kelly, of

Manchester, some of whose remarks he had endeavoured to use as being favourable to his views with regard to a protective tariff, and he would assure the right hon. Gentleman and the House likewise that his good wishes would be appreciated not only by Mr. Kelly himself but by all of them who were interested in this great question. Whilst the wishes of the right hon. Gentleman were endorsed by all of them, he ventured to say Mr. Kelly would be a great acquisition to this House, to them at any rate who directly represented labour, although if he were a Member there would be one vote the less for the views held by the right hon. Gentleman, because the Gentleman who now represented the division which Mr. Kelly was contesting was a very strong supporter of the right hon. Gentleman's views. It would be one more to their side if Mr. Kelly were returned, and therefore he wished him every success in his election campaign.

He thought it would be well at this juncture if he were to state the views of the representatives of labour on this great question, although some tendency had been shown to despise, perhaps, any observations made by those who were placed in the front rank of the movement and were endeavouring to lead the men as far as their own lights would enable them. The representatives of the great labour movement issued a manifesto to the whole of the workers of this country, and the result on being analysed showed that out of thirteen labour members in this House, the twelve who were present—one was absent at the time through illness—signed this manifesto; out of forty-four directors of the Co-operative Wholesale Society, thirty-seven signed the manifesto; and of the members of the Central Board of the Co-operative Union, numbering eighty, seventy-three signed the manifesto. Of the thirteen members of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress one was bedridden for many months, but the other twelve signed the manifesto; the Committee representing the whole of the trades unions by federation numbered altogether sixteen, and fourteen of them signed the manifesto; and of the twenty-three labour representatives who formed the Moseley Commission to America sixteen signed the manifesto. So that here they found a very large majority, in fact, you might almost say the whole, against the proposals. Here, at any rate, they had practically the unanimous voice of the representatives of the trades unions and of the co-operative movement in this country. He thought that they had some reason to understand this question for themselves. Fortunately, they were not now quite so illiterate and ignorant as they might have been during the year 1840, and thereabouts, the time to which the right hon. Member had referred, and they had an opportunity now at all events of considering some of these things. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Northwich Division referred to the trades unions as being one of the things which to some extent injured the industries of this country. He was not one who would stand up here or anywhere else and say that trades unions had not made any mistakes, and that they had not done very unwise things on some occasions; but he claimed that there were employers as bad as any trades union had ever been. It was the bad employers, the oppressive employers, who were really the cause of the inception of trades unionism; and whilst perhaps a trades union in one instance might have shown some stubbornness in refusing to negotiate with the employers, he would guarantee that on the other side they could find five employers who were equally stubborn in refusing to negotiate with the union. He knew what this stubbornness was, and the employers knew what it was, and unless both employers and representatives of trades unions could exercise a little common-sense and come together and discuss these things in a proper and friendly and amicable way, they might expect similar things to occur in the future. He had had some experience in this matter; and he ventured to say that where there were good feelings existing between the representatives of the trades unions and the representatives of the employers they heard little or nothing of strikes or any troubles of the kind.

And, it being Midnight, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed this day.

Adjourned at one minute after
Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 12*th February*, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been compiled with :—Ilford Urban District Council.

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Lancashire Electric Power [H.L.]; West Riding Tramways [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways [H.L.]; Tynemouth Gas [H.L.]; Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads [H.L.]; Yorktown and Blackwater Gas [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) [H.L.]; Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas [H.L.]; Victoria University of Manchester [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Extension of Time, etc.) [H.L.]. The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Appleby Corporation Gas Bill [H.L.]; Barrow-in-Furness Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bournemouth Corporation (Tramways) Bill [H.L.]; Bridlington Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Buxton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Chesterfield Corporation (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Chesterfield Gas and Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Derwent Valley Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Ebbw Vale Urban District Water Bill [H.L.]; Filey Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Harrogate Waterworks Tramroad Bill [H.L.]; Holywood Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Corporation Act, 1902 (Amendment), Bill [H.L.]; Ipswich Dock Commission Bill [H.L.]; Leeds Corporation (Waterworks) Railway Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Bill [H.L.]; Milwr and District Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Minehead Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Nuneaton and Chilvers Coton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Oakengates, Dawley, and District Joint Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Preston Corporation Water Bill [H.L.]; Shipley Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; South Staffordshire Mines Drainage Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Ulster Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Weaver Navigation (Additional Finance) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2a.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TREATY SERIES, No. 2 (1904).

Convention respecting payment of light and harbour dues by vessels of the United States in Zanzibar; signed at Washington, 5th June, 1903. (Ratifications exchanged at Washington, 24th December, 1903.) Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).

Statement of the amount due by the public to depositors in Military Savings Banks on the 31st March, 1901, and of the receipts, interest, and disbursements in the said Military Savings Banks during the year next ensuing, ended on the 31st March, 1902, etc.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 4th February, 1904, granting a retired allowance to Edward Joseph Carey, late a messenger in the office of the Chief Secretary, Dublin Castle.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILLS.

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL [H.L.] (No 9.)

A Bill to amend the law relating to the arrangement of polling districts in Parliamentary boroughs : and

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL [H.L.] (No. 10).

A Bill to make further provision with respect to the arrangement of polling districts for the election of county councillors.

Were presented by the Lord Ribblesdale; read 1^{a}, and to be printed.

NEWCASTLE CHAPTER (AMENDMENTS) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to make further provisions for the foundation of a dean and chapter of Newcastle, and for other purposes connected therewith. Was presented by the Lord Bishop of St. Albans; read 1ª, and to be printed. (No. 11.)

WEI-HAI-WEI.

Earl SPENCER: My Lords, seeing the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in his place, I should like to ask him whether there is any truth in the rumour that has appeared in the newspapers this morning—namely, that we have given Wei-hai-Wei to the Japanese as a base for their naval operations. As this is a matter of some importance, perhaps the noble Marquess can see his way to make a statement upon it to-night.

***The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (The Marquess of Lansdowne): My Lords, my attention was directed to the rumour to which the noble Earl has referred. I need not say that the assertion is entirely without foundation, and that it is, in our belief, a mischievous fabrication. We have, however, thought it desirable to telegraph to our representatives on the spot, with the object of ascertaining whether any incident has taken place to give the slightest colour for the report.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I am sure your Lordships will have learned with regret, from the Motion which I have placed on the Paper, that the noble Earl who presides over our Committees is prevented for a time through illness from discharging those duties which he has for so many years performed greatly to his own credit, and, I believe, entirely to the satisfaction of the House. My noble friend has been advised by his medical attendants to seek rest for a time, and, in those circumstances, it is necessary to make arrangements for the performance of his duties until his return. I beg to move the Motion standing in my name, and I feel sure every member of your Lordships' House will join with me in hoping that the noble Earl will soon be restored to health and able to again take his place at the Table.

Moved, That the Lord Balfour be appointed to take the Chair in the Committee of the Whole House, and in all Committees upon Private Bills in the absence of the Chairman of Committees from illness.—(*The Marquess of Lansdowne.*)

Earl SPENCER: My Lords, I am sure everyone in the House will join with the noble Marquess in the regret which he has expressed at the illness of the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees, and in the hope that the noble Earl may be very soon restored to health, so that he may again occupy the position which he fills so admirably, and to the entire satisfaction of the House. We shall all be glad to support the proposition of the noble Marquess, that, in the absence of Lord Morley, Lord Balfour of Burleigh should discharge the duties of Chairman of Committees.

The Earl of CORK: My Lords, I hope I may be allowed to join in the feeling expressed by the noble Marquess opposite and by my noble friend the Leader of the Opposition. I regret that for some little time to come Lord Morley will be prevented from occupying the place which he so well fills in this House. Having been for so many years closely connected with railway and other matters, I feel deeply his absence from the House. He has discharged his duties most ably, and I know perfectly well the feeling of affection which is entertained towards him by everybody who has been brought into contact with him. I know also the feeling towards him of the railway officials who have had to deal with him, and I feel certain it is the hearty wish of all that the noble Earl may soon make his reappearance as Chairman of Committees—a position which he has so admirably filled for many years past.

The Duke of ABERCORN: My Lords, I should like to be allowed, as a humble Member on this side of the House, to say that we all deeply regret the absence of the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees, and trust that before long he may be restored to perfect health and again be in his place.

On Question, Motion agreed to.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: My Lords, I am sure the House will allow me to express very humbly my deep sense of the honour which has been conferred upon me, and the confidence which is placed in me, in allowing me to take this place for a time. It has come upon me with great suddenness, for I only knew of the possibility of it twenty-four hours ago. I will do my best to carry on the work for the time being in the same spirit, so far as I can imitate it, as the noble Earl who has filled the position for the last fifteen years, and no one will be more glad than myself when the noble Earl is able to resume the duties.

CHINESE LABOUR IN THE TRANSVAAL.

Order of the Day read for the adjourned debate on the Motion of the Marquess of Ripon, That an humble address be presented to His Majesty's Government for Papers relating to the affairs of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony, with special reference to the question of the employment of Chinese labour in the Transvaal."

EARL GREY: My Lords, as I listened yesterday to the speech of the noble Earl who initiated this discussion and who I regret not to see in his place to-day, and to the speech of the noble Marquess who followed him, I could not help feeling that those speeches supplied a very melancholy and a most forcible illustration of the danger connected with the attempt to rule a country six thousand miles away from this House. I do not think it would be possible to conceive a state of things more remote from the actual truth than the supposition of the noble Lord and the noble Marquess that the effect of the temporary employment of indentured Asiatics would be to oust or exclude British labour from the Transvaal. The exact opposite is the truth. On the contrary, the desire to employ, for a time, indentured Asiatics, which exists throughout the length and breadth of the Transvaal, arises from a profound conviction in the minds of men who have felt the hard pinch and stress of adverse circumstances that (1) if they are to provide employment for the new stream of British immigrants coming into the country, (2) if the Transvaal is to provide employment for the British population now resident in the Colony, and (3) if the threatened exodus of the settlers who have been attracted to the Transvaal is to be averted, it is absolutely necessary to have recourse to the measure which now engages the attention of the House.

The noble Earl who initiated this debate went so far as to declare that in his opinion it was the policy of Lord Milner to exclude British labour from the Transvaal. Does not the noble Lord know, what I thought everyone in this country knew, that it is the hope and ambition of Lord Milner to lay the secure foundation of a future British federation of self-governing States from the Zambesi to the Cape, and that the only hope of his policy being a success depends on attracting so large an influx of British settlers into South Africa as to make it absolutely impossible that South Africa will ever again become the scene of a race conflict between the Briton and the Boer? It is for this reason, and for this reason principally, because the temporary employment of Asiatic indentured labour will enable the Transvaal to provide employment, and highly-paid employment, for thousands of British artisans for whom under present conditions no employment can be found, that Lord Milner and everyone else who has at heart the hopes of seeing a peaceful and prosperous South Africa, attaches so much importance to the passage of the measure which has now been read a third time by the Legislative Council of the Transvaal.

I should have thought when I had stated that, that if that reason could be proved, it was sufficient for my argument; but, if I am not trespassing on the indulgence of your Lordships, may I adduce one or two reasons why I believe that the temporary employment of indentured Asiatics cannot result in the exclusion of British labour from the Transvaal as the noble Marquess seems to think it will? It has been my privilege to pay repeated visits to South Africa, and, although it may be difficult for any Englishman who has not visited that country to realise the fact, it is nevertheless a fact, which confronts one at every turn after one once enters South Africa, that the white man will not do work which he considers is specially the province of the Kaffir; I have seen their eyes contract and scintillate with hate and indignation when British artisans have been asked to do work which they consider would be degrading and would reduce them to the level of a Kaffir. Unless this House recognises this primary and essential fact I am afraid it is hardly in a position to solve the problem which stands before it to-day. Apart from that fact, you have the economic fact that it is impossible to work the mines with white labour except, under present conditions, at a rate of wage which no white man should be asked to accept. When the cost of living is reduced the position may be altered, but we have got to reduce the cost of living first. There are only two ways in which you can effect a reduction in the cost of living in South Africa—one is by growing the food required in South Africa in the country, instead of importing it from across the seas. Well, if we are to grow in South Africa the food required in the Transvaal, you must not tempt with very high wages all the available unskilled Kaffir labour for work in the mines. The employment of indentured Asiatics, under careful regulations, in the mines will set free a supply of Kaffir labour for work upon the land, and so make the first essential factor of cheap living possible, for it will enable the agricultural industry of South Africa to be developed with greater success than at present. The other factor in lessening the cost of living is the reduction of taxation and of railway rates. How are you to reduce railway rates unless you can command a large volume of traffic? Every gentleman connected with the administration of railways knows that the rate on railways is dependent on the volume of traffic that passes over the line. The volume of traffic is dependent on a prosperous mining industry, which is the successful pivot of all industry in South Africa; and a prosperous mining industry, again, depends upon being able to demand an adequate supply of unskilled labour. I therefore come back to the necessity of the temporary importation of indentured Asiatics in order that the mining industries should be prosperous, the volume of traffic large, the rates low, taxes reduced, and, consequently, the cost of living brought within limits which may render it possible to make experiments with white labour.

Earl Grey.

I do not wish to bore your Lordships with any reference to technical points, but I am aware that there is a gentleman—Mr. Creswell by name—who is an enthusiast on the subject of white labour—as, indeed, we all are—and he has made, perfectly honestly and with great ability, experiments which he hopes will prove that it is possible to replace unskilled coloured labour with unskilled white labour. I think, however well-meaning and enthusiastic he may be—and I, for one, sympathise with the attempt he has made to solve this problem—the whole weight of testimony is against it. All the mining engineers and the managers of the mines on the Rand, with his exception, believe that the substitution of unskilled white labour for native workers has proved costly and unsatisfactory; the work performed having varied from the maximum of the work of one white man being equal to that of two natives—which is a large assumption—to the minimum of one white being only equal to a native, whilst the pay was in the ratio of ten shillings for a white man as against two shillings for a black. The increased cost of working the mines by unskilled white labour is so excessive as to make it economically an impossible proposition. On the favourable assumption that a white man at twelve shillings a day would do quite as much work as a Kaffir at 2s.4d. per day, the average cost per ton is increased 10s. 1d., which would have a disastrous effect on the mines in the Witwatersrand area.

It was my business two or three years ago to examine very closely the relation between the numbers of coloured unskilled labourers and the numbers of the white population, and I found, to my surprise—and I think it was a matter of general surprise—that, whether you looked to Johannesburg, to Rhodesia, or to Kimberley you found the same curious coincidence that the number of unskilled coloured labourers corresponded very closely with the white population. Subsequent experience has, I believe, confirmed that first discovery, and I see it anticipated by those who have given a very close attention to this question that for every thousand Chinamen you import for a term into the Transvaal, you will have an addition of 800 to your white population, counting men, women, and children. Let me endeavour to prove to your Lordships, by a concrete instance, how necessary it is that we should increase the supply of coloured unskilled labour. I am acquainted with a group of mines in Rhodesia. Owing to the fact that the manager was able at the time of the war, owing to the mines in Johannesburg not being in operation, to obtain a sufficient supply of unskilled labour he was in a position to offer very highly-paid employment to over 100 white men on business directly connected with the mines, and this group of four mines provided sufficient trade for a whole host of hangers-on, for shops, livery stables, and hotels, and was also the means of building a line of 100 miles, which, of course, gave employment to a large number of white men connected with railways and helped to develop the country. These very mines since the war, owing to the competition that exists for drill boys, who are essential for the economical working of the mines, are unable to obtain the labour they require. The overwhelming proportion of the labour required to work the Rhodesian mines is imported from countries outside the borders, and here they enter into competition with the Rand and therefore have felt most acutely the pinch which comes from the inability of Johannesburg to supply its own mines with the labour required.

Let me further point out this consideration to your Lordships. In the yearly Report of the Government Mining Engineer for the year ended June last, the statement is made that, of the salaries and wages paid for employment in the mines, about £600,000 was paid in salaries, £2,700,000 in wages to white men, and £950,000, roughly, in wages to natives; that is to say, 28 per cent. of the total was paid to black unskilled labourers and 72 per cent. to white skilled artisans. Now, my Lords, just follow out these figures. Suppose 100,000 Chinamen were imported into the Rand and were to receive a wage of 45s. per month, which I believe is about the wage contemplated; they would receive about £2,500,000 a year, and, if the same proportion were to exist between the amount of wages paid to white and yellow labour as to-day exists between that paid to white and black labour, then the amount of money available for the salaries and wages of highly-paid white men would amount to between £7,000,000 and £8,000,000 sterling. Now if you were to divide the latter sum by the average yearly wage paid to the white employés on the Rand before the war, which was £353 per head, you get this result, that you have 20,000 white men to whom employment at that average rate of wage would be found, or one white man for every five coloured unskilled labourers, whether black or yellow. I take one other calculation to press my point home. The number of stamps at work on the Rand last November was 4,310, as against 7,145 before the war. That means that there are about 3,000 stamps idle which ought to be at work, and which, if they could be got to work again, would give employment to between 5,000 and 6,000 additional skilled white workmen at the mines, besides attracting tradesmen and others who make a living out of the mines.

I hope I have said enough to show your Lordships that the employment of Chinese indentured labour, so far from excluding British labour from South Africa, is really the foundation upon which the increased employment of British labour rests. Let me turn to another point What does this industry mean for British industries at home? A most interesting Blue-book has been issued by the Board of Trade containing a Report by Mr. Henry Birchenough, who was sent on a special commercial mission to South Africa, and I quote the following from his Report—

> "The rapidity with which South Africa has come to the front as a great market for British manufactures is almost startling. Ten years ago—in 1893—Great Britain's exports to South Africa were valued at a little under £9,000,000. Last year they almost reached £26,000,000. In 1893 South Africa stood sixth on the list of Britain's customers; last year she stood second. She has left America, Germany, France, and Australia behind, and was only beaten by India. It is no rash prediction that next year she will pass India and stand first on the list as the largest buyer in the world of the produce and manufactures of the mother country."

The realisation of that prophecy entirely depends, my Lords, upon His Majesty's Government being authorised by Parliament to give their consent to the adoption and the working of the Ordinance which has now unanimously passed its Third Reading in the Legislative Council of the Transvaal. To put it in a nutshell, Mr. Birchenough maintains that—

> "Leaving the realm of conjecture and prediction, it may be asserted that for every additional new stamp that is erected £1,600 worth of imported machinery will be required."

He calculates on the statement of the Government Mining Engineer that, given an adequate supply of coloured unskilled labour, there will be a further addition of 8,000 stamps at work five years hence; thus in the year 1908 there will be 14,500 stamps at work in the Witwatersrand area, and every one of those 8,000 new stamps means the purchase of British material to the extent of about £1,600. That sum, multiplied by 8,000, gives you the not very small total of £12,800,000 as the trade which will come to this country provided we can obtain sufficient unskilled labour to enable these 8,000 additional stamps to be worked. Every stamp in South Africa which is at work buys in British material alone, in order to enable it to perform its functions, an average of £330 worth per stamp per annum. That means that there will be on these 14,500 stamps, in addition to the £12,800,000 initial purchase of British goods, an annual expenditure of £4,785,000; and taking into account the stores required by the mines in the Transvaal—I am not taking into consideration the mines in Rhodesia which are equally affected, but am looking to the Transvaal alone—it will represent an expenditure of not less than £5,500,000 a year. Well, my Lords, I hope I have shown that South Africa, given a sufficient supply of unskilled labour, is the best customer that England has for the manufactures it produces. It already takes 23 per cent. of the total exports to British possessions, and if you allow the Transvaal to manage its own affairs that percentage will be largely increased. The noble Marquess on the Front Opposition Bench said yesterday that it was almost indecent to hurry legislation in this matter. He wished to hang it up until self-government had been restored to the Transvaal. Well, my Lords, in view of Lord Milner's assurance that further delay in present conditions means the shutting down of mines which it does not pay to work; that it means an exodus of the present population of the Transvaal, and possibly, a recrudescence and revival of racial and political difficulties, I contend that the further postponement of this question does not admit even of consideration. The crisis is urgent and must be dealt with at once. I was rather surprised to hear the noble Earl Lord Portsmouth and the noble Marquess on the Front Opposition Bench refer to the suggestion that a referendum should be taken with expressions almost of contempt. I could hardly believe my ears when the noble Earl informed the noble Duke the Under-Secretary for the Colonies that he would not be content with a referendum because in his opinion it would not give an honest return of the actual opinion of the population. I have had the great privilege of seeing Lord Milner at work in the Transvaal. I know what trouble he has taken to surround himself with officials of the highest character and the greatest ability, and I believe that of the many great services which Lord Milner has contributed to the Empire, the service he has rendered in establishing a Civil Service of the highest possible character in the Transvaal which will carry on his ideal when self-government is restored to it, is not the least of those services. I therefore think it is a disgrace on the part of any Member of this House to refer to Lord Milner and the whole of the Civil Service as if they were scoundrels and rogues.

The noble Marquess said he wanted a constitutional expression of the opinion of the Transvaal. If the noble Marquess had made himself acquainted with the facts connected with the election of the Municipal Council of Johannesburg, which is elected under the ballot and upon a wide franchise, he would have realised that, out of nineteen members who were nominated by Lord Milner to serve on the Legislative Council, eighteen were returned for their separate constituencies, and that only one of Lord Milner's nominees was not returned, and he was Mr. Whiteside, one of the two gentlemen who signed the Minority Report. That is sufficient to show that the Transvaal, where they have had an opportunity of expressing their view by constitutional method, have declared that they desire to have indentured Chinese labour. There is not the slightest doubt that it is the desire of the Transvaal, and this Parliament will be taking upon itself a most serious responsibility if it prevents the wish of the Transvaal being carried into effect.

The noble Marquess was very much impressed by the fact that in Cape Colony both Parties are opposed to the importation of indentured Chinamen into the Transvaal. I do not know whether it is in the recollection of your Lordships that a few years ago a very influential organisation was founded, of which Lord Avebury and Mr. Leonard Courtney were the chief spirits, the object of which was to reform our present system of conducting elections, with a view of securing that the House of Commons should be a faithful mirror of the nation at large. One of the objections to our present system was that where Parties are equally balanced the independent man is given a supreme position on the political seesaw. It is absolutely necessary if you go into politics as practical men that you should do everything in your power, while elections are carried out under present conditions, to capture the balancing vote which decides the character of the election. That is exactly what is happening in Cape Colony. You have six or seven constituencies in which the Bond and the Progressives are equally balanced, and there is a comparatively small Kaffir vote which can decide the election, and can also decide whether the Bond Party or the Progressive Party should get a majority at a general election. Do you suppose, my Lords, clever electioneers like Mr. Merriman, who is now, I understand, experiencing a little political repose, and like the Bond Party—the cleverest electioneers in the British Empire—are not going to take advantage of any cry they can get hold of in order to attract the Kaffir vote to their side? Every Kaffir has had a hideous picture painted for him by the Bond Party showing how the introduction of Chinamen is going to fill his life with misery, horror, and anxiety. The Progressive Party, on the other hand, have been compelled to complain that they, too, are also strongly opposed to the introduction of Chinese labour; and Dr. Jameson gave notice that he would introduce a Bill making it illegal for Chinamen to come from the Transvaal into Cape Colony.

Then the noble Earl made a great point of the fact that while thirty per thousand was the rate of mortality in the De Beers mines at Kimberley, seventy per thousand was the rate of mortality in Johannesburg. He drew the inference that, therefore, the treatment of the natives was bad, and that if the treatment had been good the mines would have been able to obtain all the labour they required. The noble Earl has not had the advantage which I have had of studying the conditions both on the Rand and at Kimberley. Let me explain the difference between the conditions of work at Kimberley and at Johannesburg. At Kimberley, owing to the fact that you have to deal with an article which can be stolen simply by being swallowed, it has been found necessary to employ the compound system. In the Rand there is no such system. The natives are allowed to go where they please. The result is that the Kaffirs in the DeBeers mines at Kimberley are better cared for, and run less risk of laying the seeds of disease than the natives on the Rand. And there is this further difference, that the diamond mines at Kimberley are worked by men who are drawn from the high plateau lands of South Africa—mainly from Basutoland, which is the Switzerland of South Africa. They are a much more hardy race than the coast natives who work at Johannesburg. I think I have explained the reasons which account for the increased mortality at Johannesburg as compared with Kimberley.

The most rev. Primate, who, with a statesmanship which characterises all his utterances, did not oppose himself to the measure which is before the House, very properly drew the attention of His Majesty's Government to certain grave dangers which he saw in the importation of indentured Chinamen into Johannesburg. I feel that His Majesty's Government will, in consultation with Lord Milner, provide every safeguard that can be provided, but I should hope that this House would see the wisdom of allowing the Transvaal to settle this affair in the way that may seem to them best. I would point this consideration to the most rev. Primate. It is only suggested that the Chinamen should come for an indentured term of a few years. That is exactly what the Kaffirs are doing in Kimberley to-day, and, if the principle of the compound is vicious for indentured Chinamen, the principle is equally vicious at the De Beers mines, where every one admits who has made a study of the matter, that the condition of the natives in the compounds is better than that of any other natives outside Kimberley. Even in the British Army privates enlist for three years, and are not afforded the advantages of family life any more than is proposed in the case of the indentured Chinamen. Further than that, every pioneer has to do without the advantages of family life; it is one of the penalties he has to pay for his enterprise in opening up a new country. I have not got the figures by me, but in the Transvaal, before the war, the percentage of married miners who were there without their wives was a very large one indeed. What we have to do is to reduce the cost of living, in order that our white community may be able to live under conditions which lead to that morality which characterises all British communities.

On the question of fair treatment of the miners I would only say this, that it is absolutely to the interest of the mine manager to treat his natives well, for otherwise he cannot obtain the labour supply on which he depends for the prosecution of his industry. Major Pearce, in a Report on the Trade and General Conditions of the British Central African Protectorate for 1902–3, refers to the good effect which work in the mines of Rhodesia has had on the natives who come from Central Africa. He quotes the opinion recorded by one of the most philanthropic missionaries in South Africa, who has had an extremely long residence in the country, and has unparalleled knowledge of the British Central African native. He states that they are brought into contact with European wonders, and that the superintendence of the white men has rendered the natives much cleaner in their habits, more dignified and more hard-working, and that instead of the dull intellect, with no other thought than women, food, and beer, the younger generation who have sought improvement beyond the limits of their own country now show a far better stamp of countenance and have a greater desire to learn and write. That shows that the mines in Rhodesia are the best schools to which the natives of South Africa can go; and the presence of indentured Asiatics in the Rand mines is absolutely necessary unless the prosperity of Rhodesia is to receive a fatal check.

It is said that this is a form of slavery, but there is no compulsion to make the Chinaman come. He comes of his own accord. The question is asked, "Will he come"? I read in a Report by Mr. Campbell, His Majesty's Consul, on a journey in Mongolia that many of the Chinese have to live and support their families on a penny a day. I do not think it requires very great compulsion to induce Chinamen who are receiving that rate of wage, on which they often have to support a wife and nine children, to come to the Transvaal, where they can obtain a monthly wage of 45s. and at the end of their term of indenture, can return to China capitalists, enabled to live with their families in far greater prosperity than is within the reach of those who remain at home. The noble Marquess on the Front Opposition Bench ventured yesterday to lecture the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for supporting the introduction of indentured Asiatic Labour into the Transvaal at such a critical time as the present in the Far East.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I beg the noble Earl's pardon. I did not take the noble Marquess to task over the matter. I simply said that it was a most unfortunate time to have negotiations of this sort with China. I never dreamt of blaming the noble Marquess for the course he has taken. As a matter of fact, I do not know what he has done.

EARL GREY: I think it is still more unfortunate, when the whole peace and prosperity of South Africa depends on our being able to obtain, in response to the wish of the Transvaal, the importation, under carefully considered regulations, of indentured Asiatic Labour, that the noble Marquess should use his influence in this House on the side of inducing the authorities in China to check the flow of Chinamen out of that country into the Transvaal. In my opinion the real danger in South Africa is not the yellow peril but the black peril. You have a small white population living in a country in which the blacks are steadily growing. As they increase in numbers you will have to find means of enabling them to support themselves by honest labour. They are growing gradually to assume European wants, but the pace is very slow, and it is because I take a really serious view of the future of South Africa, that I feel it is necessary, as an education to our black population, that the indentured Asiatic should come in and do the same work which, up to now, has been performed by them, so as to enable the country to lay the foundation of a big and growing industry which will every year demand more and more labour, and to render it possible, when the time comes that the increased black population are unable to maintain themselves out of their farms, for them to earn their livelihood by work at the mines, by replacing the indentured Asiatics whom we only ask for as a temporary stop-gap.

EARL CARRINGTON: My Lords, I beg at the outset in the clearest possible way to dissociate myself from any unknown or anonymous person who has ever called Lord Milner or any person connected with the Rand a rogue or a scoundrel. I feel very deeply on this subject, and I think it is the duty in this crisis of every man to speak openly and fearlessly, and I assure your Lordships that whatever I have to say on this subject will be said with the greatest respect to every person connected with the mining industry, and, above all, to the great nation of China, whose natives it is proposed to bring into the Transvaal. We have nothing to say against China or against her people; but we oppose the bringing of these people into a British colony, and also the way in which this labour is proposed to be brought in. The noble Earl who has just sat down seemed to me to have two main propositions in his interesting and forcible speech. He said first that the whole peace and prosperity of the Transvaal depends on the temporary employment of Chinese, and he made a great point of the word "temporary." But I would very respectfully say to the noble Earl that all those who have knowledge of Chinese in a British colony know that while it is very easy to get them into it it, is as difficult to get them out as it is to get the white ants out of a Queensland log hut.

I should like for one moment to refer to what the noble Earl said about Mr. Cresswell, who is well known now as a sort of missionary of white labour in this country. Mr. Cresswell maintains that white labour can be made to pay. That is the whole foundation of our argument. We say that it has not been proved that white labour is impossible. The noble Earl truly said that a great argument had been brought against Mr. Cresswell's proposals, and no doubt Mr. Cresswell had to leave his employment, but my noble friend Lord Portsmouth yesterday pointed out to the House what the reason of the cessation of white labour was. It was put in evidence before the Labour Commission. A letter from the representative in England was sent out to say that Messrs. Wernher Beit and Co., for various reasons, opposed white labour. That letter is in evidence, and I need not take up the time of the House in further referring to it. The noble Earl went on to draw a most magnificent fancy picture of 14,500 stamps in full work, and he almost took one's breath away with the millions that were to be turned out and the thousands of pounds that this country was going to receive in consequence of the enormous increase of trade on account of Chinese labour. But I would very respectfully submit that if, as we believe, white labour can be employed at a profit, instead of supplementing the present labour with yellow labour we should supplement it with white labour. You would then have this result, that you would save the passage money to and from the Flowery Land of these indentured labourers, and the whole of the £2,700,000 would go into the pockets of white men, who we still maintain could run these mines and work them at a profit.

EARL GREY: My point is that if this proposal is not adopted you will not have 4,000 stamps at work.

EARL CARRINGTON: I would point out to the noble Earl that the majority of the mining agents in South Africa are not Britons at all; they are Americans, and therefore they are perfectly content with the *status quo*. Why should they puzzle their brains to get new machinery and new means of making a mine pay when they have the wish expressed by the magnates in London that they should continue as they are with cheap labour imported from China? May I be permitted for one moment to turn to a speech which we listened to with great interest last night —I allude to the speech of the noble Duke the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, and to compliment the noble Duke upon it. It was certainly the opinion of everyone on this side of the House that he made a most excellent defence of what, unhappily, we consider to be an uncommonly bad case. The noble Duke told us that mining is the staple industry on which the prosperity of the country depends. With that the noble Earl who has just sat down entirely agrees, and I suppose there is not one person in your Lordships' House or in this country who would disagree with that, and that to my mind seems to be all the more reason why the mines should be worked with resident white labour and not with Asiatic indentured labour. The question, in our judgment, should be determined by an Imperial Commission, with Imperial assessors, and not decided on the evidence of mine-owners alone and of their engineers, most of whom, as I have said, are not British but American.

It seems to us that the mining industry is divided into two absolutely different sections. There is, first, the company-promoting, share-producing industry, and I suppose I shall have again to say that I speak with every possible respect of that industry; on the other hand, there is the mining industry proper. I maintain that these mining magnates, as they are called—these financial magnates —cannot in any way be compared with the leaders of British industry, such as ironmasters, coalowners or shipowners, who, to run their business, must be well aware of the intricacies of them. It seems to me that the Government on the one side is accepting the representations of the first section, while we who are opposing this accept the representations of the second or industrial section. I am not in the habit of speaking for other people, but I am informed by Mr. Richard Bell, who represents 2,000,000 working-men, by Mr. John Burns, Mr. William Crooks, Mr. W. Steadman, and the other leaders in the industrial world, that my noble friend the Marquess of Ripon when he brought this question before your Lordships and objected to the Ordinance, had every British workman at his back. That is important enough, but I also think I am not exaggerating when I say that my noble friend in his battle for white labour has also the support of every single Colonial Governor, with, perhaps, one or two exceptions. He has also, naturally, the support of the Colonies themselves. An allusion was, I think, made in the debate to Canada, and to the fact that Canada had said nothing. Canada has not spoken Imperially, but it has acted Imperially, for I believe that within the last few weeks the Colony of British Columbia has put up the poll tax—my noble friend the Earl of Aberdeen will correct me if I am wrong—has put up the poll tax on every Chinaman to £100 a head.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN: One hundred dollars.

EARL CARRINGTON: Then the noble Duke went on to say that the opinion in South Africa in general is not unfavourable to the proposal. Take Rhodesia. You have there simply a handful of men who are entirely under the direction and under the orders of certain speculative companies. They have no self-government—

EARL GREY: I beg the noble Earl's pardon. We have in Rhodesia a Legislative Council which is elected by the people, and our Legislative Council unanimously passed in 1901 an Ordinance authorising the importation of indentured Asiatics into the country under very careful conditions. It has not been permitted up to now to use that Ordinance, but I trust that Rhodesia will have the same right accorded to it as the Transvaal.

EARL CARRINGTON: After what the noble Earl has said I withdraw my statement and accept the correction. Let us now take Natal. Natal is a semi-tropical colony full of aliens and supports the proposal, because they cannot logically refuse approval, as it is identically what they are doing themselves. I need not trouble the House with the opinion of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, because that was duly dealt with by my noble friend behind me. With regard to Cape Colony, I think the noble Duke the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies will agree with me that every single person in Cape Colony is dead against the proposal.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): No.

EARL CARRINGTON: I do not desire to exaggerate in any way, I will therefore say that in Cape Colony the consensus of opinion is decidedly opposed to the proposal.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Hear, hear!

EARL CARRINGTON: I saw a little of the Chinese in Australia. In 1888 I was given to understand by Sir Henry Parkes that there might probably be a great difficulty as to the introduction of Chinese into the colony, and that if any large number of Chinese were proposed to be landed, they would probably be resisted by force. The crisis came quicker than most people expected. Early in May, 1888, three ships, with something like 500 Chinese coolies on board each ship, tried to land in Sydney harbour. The whole population turned out with swords and staves. They stood on the quay and said: "These people shall not land." The excitement was so great that there was a meeting of 40,000 people, and anti-Chinese resolutions were passed. The mayor, at the head of 5,000 citizens, marched up George Street to Parliament Street and tried to get into the Legislative Assembly, the House being then sitting, to inform the Government what the feeling about the Chinese was. They were shut out, but the language that was used by the Prime Minister will, perhaps, show what the tension of feeling was at that time. The Prime Minister said in Parliament—

> In this crisis of the Chinese question we do not mean to turn back. Neither for Her Majesty's ships of war, nor for Her Majesty's representative on the spot, nor for the Secretary of State, do we intend to turn back from our purpose, which is to terminate the landing of the Chinese in Australia for ever."

I do not think the Australians approved of that strong language, but I am bound to say that it reflected the opinion of every individual in the colony. The men on the ships to which I have referred were not allowed to be landed. I then telegraphed over to the Secretary of State for the Colonies—at that time Viscount Knutsford—informing him of the state of affairs, and asked whether, if a Chinese Restriction Bill was passed which could be approved, I might give the Royal Assent to it. The noble Viscount rose to the occasion, and though it was then stated by several important personages, as it is in this case, that this was a dishonest cry, yet he gave me permission, and I was able to tell the Ministers that there would be no difficulty as to the Royal Assent being given to a Chinese Immigration Restriction Bill. That action, if it did not prevent the separation of the colony altogether, at any rate put an end to a very dangerous crisis.

Then I think it might be asked, and very forcibly asked, what is the objection to these Chinamen? There must be something behind it. Englishmen know as little about the Chinese question as most Australians do about Spanish marriages. What is the object of this great antagonism to Chinamen? We know them to be a very frugal, patient, industrious, and law-abiding race; but there are objections to them that they undersell the white population. In Australia we know they are extremely difficult to get rid of. In the case of South Africa there is that black peril to which the noble Earl alluded, which is, of course, a great menace, but if there was a rising amongst the natives it would be an uncommonly disagreeable thing for a small band of white settlers to have 150,000 or 200,000 discontented Chinamen in their rear. But I think I ought to state what was always considered in Australia to be the real danger of the Chinese. Their being law-biding people is one of their great dangers. You never hear of a Chinaman being brought up before an English magistrate for any outrage or crime committed on another Chinaman; it is the rarest thing in the world. They are brought up for offences against white people, but not for offences among themselves. They have a sort of law of their own. If a man commits a murder he disappears; if he commits burglary or any other offence he is punished according to the Chinese law, and it is felt that this *Imperium in imperio* in the State is a very dangerous thing.

The Chinese come as bachelors, and as they are a patient and affectionate race the result is that they marry women of a very low class. We have to look to the future, and the great ideal of the Australian colonists is a white Empire of Anglo-Saxon blood. They do not want any mixture of breed or hybrid marriages. I ask your Lordships to consider what sort of colonists will they be breeding up for the future as subjects of the King in South Africa, whose father was a John Chinaman and whose mother was a woman of the description I have referred to? And, last of all, there is that great evil, to which I need not allude, which was put before the House last night by the most rev. Primate. I think that the whole of Christendom must thank him for having made the speech which he delivered last night. I need not say one more word on that most difficult aspect of the subject. I understand the noble Earl to say that Lord Milner hopes to lay the foundation of a future British federation of self-governing States from the Zambesi to the Cape, and that that is his ambition. I think that is the hope and ambition and ideal of every man in this country. We do not quarrel with the ideal, but with the way in which Lord Milner seems determined to carry it out. I speak of Lord Milner with every possible respect, and even those in South Africa who are opposed to his policy speak of him in the highest possible way. He is universally acknowledged to be a great man, a strong man, to have a very high sense of duty, and to stick to his opinion at all hazards—a very courageous high-principled Englishman. But I would like to ask, is Lord Milner always right? Is he right in this instance? Was he right in 1899 when he took the advice of the leaders of the financial houses and gave us to understand that the Boers would not fight under any circumstances? Was he right in 1902 when he advocated the suspension of the Constitution of the Cape Colony, which was negatived, and everybody thinks very properly negatived, by His Majesty's Government? And was he right in 1903 when he said "We do not want a white proletariat"? The moment that Lord Milner said that the flag was down and the race for Chinese labour began. The noble Duke the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies said, and I have no doubt he and the other members of the Government implicitly believe it, that white labour is discontinued on account of the cost and not from any fear of any white labour combination.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Hear, hear!

EARL CARRINGTON: Well, but I hardly think that statement can be reconciled which the announcement made by the Committee of Johannesburg Engineers, who as I have already said, are all Americans. What did they say? They said that if this policy—the policy of Chinese labour—is pursued there will be no opening for the trail of the serpent—that is, for the foundation of labour unions; and a still more astounding statement was made at a meeting held on 9th February last year and presided over by Lord Harris. At that meeting a memorandum by Mr. Rudd was quoted, in which that gentleman is reported in *The Times* to have written—

> "Should we replace 200,000 natives by 100,000 unskilled whites, they would simply hold the Government in the hollow of their hands."

Now, my Lords, those statements seem to me to give the whole case completely away The real reason for this Chinese invasion is that the whites would simply hold the Government in the hollow of their hands. We may think as highly as we like of the integrity, honour, and patriotism of Mr. Rudd, but what are we to think of his understanding? The noble Duke the Under-Secretary told us that in days gone by foreign labourers were imported and the regulations made afterwards, but that now the rules are to be settled before the Chinese are brought in, and their social, moral, and religious interests are to be considered by His Majesty's Government. Let us consider for one moment what the position is. On one of the big mines that I know there are 4,000 coolies to be employed. These men are to be brought over from China, and are to be put into a compound or stockade. I do not know if many noble Lords in this House have seen a native compound. I have, and a more horrible sight it is impossible to conceive. Imagine a piece of ground surrounded with corrugated iron, and crowded with natives, some sitting smoking in a corner, others sitting and gambling, others asleep in different parts of the compound, and a great many of them sitting in a large ring watching a dance, to say the least of it, somewhat wanting in delicacy. You are to bring these Chinamen over, and put them into one of these stockades. You tell them that their working hours are to be spent underground, and that their hours of recreation will be spent in the stockade. They are to have no civic rights; they are not to be allowed to go out of the stockade, except on very special occasions when they may be granted a permit; if they feel aggrieved or ill-used they are, under no circumstances, to be allowed to go out of the compound; if they escape, they are captured and brought back by force; if any white man harbours or succours them, it is an offence punishable by fine and imprisonment; they are not to indulge in any commerce or any trade; they are not to own land or till land. During the three years that they are indentured in this way they are bound over to the person who claims their services. They cannot leave that man's employ, though he has, as I believe was said in the other House of Parliament, power, without their consent, to transfer their services to some other proprietor. That is the social condition that you offer these men. Then, as regards their morality, you say, "Oh! we will look after their morals. We think it is necessary that the wives should accompany them, only we cannot have every one's wife." I believe the proportion of wives is one in every fifty, so that it comes to this—

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: From what document is the noble Earl quoting?

EARL CARRINGTON: I am told that the proportion is as I have stated.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: In Natal the number of wives who accompany the natives is about 40 per cent.

EARL CARRINGTON: Are we to understand that that will be the proportion in the case of the Chinese?

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I can make no pledge with regard to the Chinese.

EARL CARRINGTON: There is no pledge forthcoming as to the proportion of wives who are to accompany the Chinese. Then we look after the religious aspect. We tell these people that we respect their religion, and I am given to understand that there is a trade already going to be initiated for supplying the imported Chinese coolies with cheap idols, to be made in this country, for the purpose of their worship. And then, in conclusion, we tell them that we know it is their wish their last resting place should be in China, and we promise to send their bones back in the event of anything happening to them during the three years. I am bound to admit that if the rate of mortality is anything like the seventy per thousand per annum quoted last night by my noble friend Lord Portsmouth, there will be a lucrative trade in carrying back the remains of these unfortunate people to the land from which they came. I apologise to your Lordships for having addressed you at such length, but I felt bound to speak on the subject, as it is one upon which I feel very keenly. I join with my noble friend who introduced this subject to your Lordships and implore the Government to stay their hand. Do let the English nation know what they are doing. At least let us read the evidence that is contained in the Blue-book. There can be no hurry. What is the object of this feverish impatience to get these Chinese people into South Africa? In the good old times, or the bad old times, of Kruger, the output of the gold mines was £100,000,000 sterling a year, while now it has fallen to £70,000,000.

I implore His Majesty's Government to give breathing time, and to let the English nation know what they are doing. If the nation understood what would be the terrible results of this Chinese immigration into South Africa, there would be such a consensus of opinion as would force the Government to flash the message across the seas: "We, the Imperial Government, refuse to sanction this most un-British and unholy thing."

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, nobody is more entitled to address your Lordships on the subject of the importation of Chinese labour than the noble Earl who has just sat down, for he was Governor of New South Wales at a time when the importation of Chinese labour was a burning question, and I think I may safely say that none of Her Late Majesty's representatives in Australasia was more popular with the people than my noble friend. In his position as the representative of the Crown, the noble Earl naturally had to observe a somewhat guarded attitude on the question until such time as he was able to publish the correspondence which had taken place between himself and the Secretary of State. It was then found that the noble Earl was more Australian than the Australians on this question. He was received everywhere with cheers—with cheers that I have never heard equalled except when a gentleman is belabouring a Government of which he until recently was a member. But the noble Earl has another claim upon your Lordships' attention, because I notice that two or three days ago he was the Chairman of a meeting held at the Queen's Hall to protest against the importation of Asiatic labourers into the Transvaal. That meeting was described in the organ of noble Lords opposite, the *Daily News*, as one representative of all Parties and of all sections. I looked through the list of Members of the Legislature who were present, and, so far as I could see, the only Member there of the Party to which I have the honour to belong was an hon. and gallant Gentleman a member of the other House of Parliament, who is principally known for the candid criticism which he bestows upon the Government he is supposed to support. Whether it was representative of the sections of the Party to which noble Lords opposite belong I am unable to say, because I do not know how many sections there are.

Earl Carrington.

The noble Earl described the terrors which might menace the small white population in the Transvaal if they had 100,000 Chinamen in their rear. The noble Earl likes to make our flesh creep. I do not think there is this serious menace of the white population in the Transvaal. I agree with the noble Lord that the Chinaman is not a desirable inhabitant of a white country. He is a useful man upon occasions; he has been very useful to my noble friend and myself; he has washed our dirty linen in private, and has grown our cabbages, and he is willing to work for a lower wage than the white man. He is not unlike the Russian and the Pole who settle in the East End of London, and as such the Australian Government were doing what was only their duty to those whom they represented in urging upon the Secretary of State that the Chinaman should be excluded from the colony. But surely, my Lords, the position is quite different in this case. In Australia the Chinese had come in freely, and the difficulty was to get rid of them. The stable door had been left open, and the undesirable animal was allowed to come in and roam about where he pleased. In the case of the Transvaal it is proposed to put him in a comfortable loose-box where he can do no harm, and when his work is done he will go back to his own country with a nice little sum in his pocket. The noble Earl said he would be more difficult to get out than the white ant. I cannot help thinking that there is a little discrepancy in the argument of the noble Earl when he complains of the restrictions on the one hand which are to be placed on the Chinese, and on the other that they will run all over the place and will not be able to be restrained. I believe the precautions which Lord Milner is about to take will be amply sufficient to avoid all the evils which the noble Earl fears. I do not know where the noble Earl got the statement that Lord Milner's prophecies always come untrue; I do not know where he got the quotation that Lord Milner said the Boers would at no time fight the British. In the course of the negotiations, just as in the course of the recent negotiations between Russia and Japan, there may have been moments when it was impossible to conceive that such a thing as war would take place; but because Lord Milner said that at some time or other, I cannot admit that he is a prophet without honour. Then the noble Marquess opposite said last night that there was no precedent in the whole of the King's dominions for such a course as that proposed in this case.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I made the statement on the authority of the Colonial Secretary.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: Of course, I do not suggest that anything exactly the same has taken place, but for many years past it has been the practice to import indentured coloured labourers into the West Indian Colonies. There is a great similarity between the conditions.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: No.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: I will point out what the similarity is. In the first place, the Indian coolie is just as much obliged to reside on the plantation as it is proposed that the Chinaman should be obliged to reside in the compound. He cannot leave his plantation without a pass, and he may be fined for deserting from his labour. All these things are identical with the proposals which it is suggested should be made in the Transvaal, and, so far as I know, they have not been looked upon as a condition of slavery by the coolies who are subject to them. Last year I believe there were 14,600 coolies in British Guiana. There were only six complaints made by them, and four were dismissed. Some 1,150 went back to their homes and took with them £9,000, whilst they had remitted £2,000 to their relatives. To show that they did not consider that they were badly treated, although every discouragement was placed in the way of their coming back, 359 returned. The noble Marquess said that it was proposed to bring 196,000 Chinese into the Transvaal. The noble Earl was in error. On the contrary, it has always been the policy of Lord Milner that no stone should be left unturned to get a sufficient number of Kaffir labourers to balance the Chinese who may be imported. What is proposed is to bring in an experimental batch of 10,000, and I can only express the hope that Lord Milner will be successful in getting as many.

I now come to the speech of the most rev. Primate. The Archbishop of Canterbury complained that there was no reference in the Blue-book to any provision for looking after the morals of the Chinese who might be imported into the Transvaal. There was a reference, but I admit that it was not from an official source. Mr. Skinner, who was sent to China by the Transvaal Government to inquire into the conditions of life of the Chinese, recommended that there should be a regular remittance of their wages home, that they should have their passage free with food, and that an advance of wages should be made to them before they left; also that when they arrived they should have free house accommodation, medical attendance, Chinese clothing, and religious facilities. I do not know whether that is the trade in idols that was referred to by my noble friend just now. There is also a reference to the importation of their womankind. Mr. Skinner strongly recommended that those labourers who proved themselves to be most efficient should be encouraged by their womankind being sent for to follow them, but a complaint has been made that there was nothing in the Papers to show what steps His Majesty's Government had taken in this matter. Well, my Lords, it is precisely because this matter was carefully considered when it was originally proposed to introduce coloured labour, that it was not thought necessary to set forth in the Blue-book all that had been going on between Lord Milner and His Majesty's Government; but I may inform the most rev. Primate that the matter is very far from having been lost sight of. We had the advantage of having in this country a few months ago perhaps the most experienced man in the British Empire in the management of Chinese—Sir Frank Swettenham. Sir Frank Swettenham and Lord Milner had many interviews together, and he impressed on Lord Milner what were the conditions that would best contribute to the morality of the Chinese. His Majesty's Government have sent out to the Transvaal the Protector of the Chinese from Singapore, a man well acquainted with all the requirements of Chinamen, who will do all he can to make the experiment a success. The regulations are not, and cannot be, settled because they have to be arranged in consonance with the Chinese Government, and until that has been done it will not be possible to publish them. Your Lordships will have observed that my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies has given an assurance in another place that the matter would be carefully considered, and that he intended to take steps to see that a sufficient number—he is not, of course, in a position now to say what that number will be—of Chinese wives and families should be allowed to accompany the labourers to the Transvaal.

There was another point raised by the noble Marquess on the Front Bench opposite. He asked whether these regulations would be explained to the Chinamen before they left China. Yes, my Lords, of course they will. They will be explained to the Chinamen before they start, not only by people of their own nationality, but by His Majesty's Consuls or by persons appointed specially by the Government to see that the conditions are thoroughly understood. The noble Earl who spoke last gave your Lordships a thrilling account of the conditions obtaining in what he called a stockade. I know what a compound is, but there is no mention in the Ordinance of either a stockade or a compound. The intention is that a representative of His Majesty's Government shall see that these people, men and women, are decently and comfortably housed. I do not know whether the noble Earl advocates that they should be allowed to hold land and engage in trade, but at any rate I do not think that would be very welcome in the Transvaal or in any other part of South Africa. As to the suggestion which was made last night by the noble Earl who initiated this discussion, that Lord Milner's policy was to exclude British labour, there are 10,000 white men working at the mines to-day and at good rates of wages. They are receiving £1 a day, and I think that is quite sufficient to maintain any working man, even with his wife and family and under the expensive circumstances that obtain in the Transvaal. There are some white labourers in Europe who do not get more than 2s. a day. For the least skilled labour 13 guineas a month is paid, and drill men get £32 a month. An important consideration, too, is that white men will not work at unskilled labour under the same conditions as black men.

The noble Earl talked as if there were only white men in South Africa. You have got a black race which is not diminishing, not disappearing as it is in Australia, but which is increasing, and you have got to reckon with it. You will always have—I hope you will always have — the Kaffirs working in the mines, and I say, upon the evidence which is in the Blue-book, and upon the evidence which is known to my noble friend who addressed you last but one, that if you put white and black men alongside doing unskilled labour, the former become demoralised. The true settlement of this question can only be obtained by confining the skilled labour to the white man and the unskilled labour to the black. For every eight black men working at the mines you have one white man; so that if you import 100,000 more black labourers it will provide employment for 12,500 skilled white men, who will bring with them their wives and families.

*Lord TWEEDMOUTH: There is no question as to importing black labour. The question is one of yellow labour.

The Earl of ONSLOW: Well, I will substitute the term unskilled coloured labourers. A great deal was made by the noble Lord and by other noble Lords of Mr. Tarbutt's letter and of the memorandum of Mr. Rudd. I am sorry that the noble Earl had not the opportunity of going through the ponderous volume which the noble Duke the Under-Secretary brought down, for he would have found in it more material for his speech. He would have found that one or two gentlemen suggested that the real remedy was forced labour. Whether it was to be with whips or bayonets I do not know, but I am surprised that nobody has taken hold of that and suggested that, because this or that irresponsible person suggested forced labour, it showed the trial of the Vice-regal serpent. My noble friend relies on Mr. Cresswell and his experiment in the adoption of white labour. My noble friend quoted Mr. Tarbutt's letter as an indication that Messrs. Wernher Beit and Co. were wholly opposed to this experiment of white labour, but if he will read the Blue-book carefully he will find that Mr. Cresswell stated that Messrs. Wernher Beit and Co. did all they could to give him a free hand to make a fair and impartial trial of the employment of white labour under prevailing conditions, but the experiment broke down completely. Nobody would have been more pleased that it should have been a success than those who were so deeply interested in the output of the mines.

Mr. Creswell himself pointed out the reason why it was a failure. He said it was because the white men who were worth anything were gradually becoming skilled men. They would not work at 8s. 6d. and he did not think 10s. would be much use to them, and even 12s. was not a living wage for a married man. Does anybody really believe that it would have been possible to carry on the mining industry of South Africa at a rate of wage of 12s. per day per unskilled labourer? The result would be that the mines would have to be shut down. The efficiency of unskilled white labour, of which a great deal has been made, was shown to have been only 1·23 to 1 of the value of unskilled black labour, whilst the cost was three or four times as great. The only way in which you can deal with white labourers is that they should gradually come to be skilled labourers. Noble Lords who take exception to this proposal can find plenty of material to support their argument in this Blue-book. The Blue-book has not been doctored or cooked. It contains everything on the subject that can be told. There are reports of many meetings and speeches adopting the same attitude as that of noble Lords opposite, but what I want to draw your Lordships' especial attention to is the extraordinary change of opinion which has come over the people of the Transvaal in the last few months. The Report of the Commission came out on 19th November, and since that date there has been no expression of opinion opposed to the necessity—not the desirability, but the necessity—of introducing unskilled coloured labour. On 2nd December the Chamber of Mines passed a resolution in favour of it, and on the 12th of the same month the Johannesburg Stock Exchange passed a similar resolution. On the same day the Johannesburg Chamber of Trade adopted a similar view. On the 18th December a large public meeting was held at Johannesburg at which, by an enormous majority, this policy was supported. On the following day a large meeting in the same sense was held at the Wanderers' Club, and, finally, you have the debate and division in the Legislative Council. Noble Lords opposite minimise the authority of the Legislative Council. The noble Marquess opposite asked, "What are they?" They are, he said, a set of nominated officials who have got to do what they are told by the Government.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I did not say that.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: Well he said they were nominated officials. Let me say that they were specially enjoined that they were to record their votes entirely in accordance with their opinions, and not because they were members of the Government. What I want to draw the attention of the noble Marquess to is this, that in the constitution of that council Lord Milner was not guided solely, or, I think I may say, mainly, by the question of whether these men were the best men in the colony, or whether they were the men most likely to approve of his policy or his Government. He was guided by the comparative importance of the different elements composing the body politic; that is to say, the members were specially selected as representative of all interests in the Transvaal. Therefore, I claim that this is not the decision of an ordinary Crown Colony Legislature, but that it should be looked upon as really representing the opinion of the large majority of people in the Transvaal.

A great deal was said as to the opinion that has been expressed by the other great self-governing colonies in the Empire. I have had the honour of the acquaintance of the Prime Minister of New Zealand for a great many years, and I think there is no man in whose breast the spirit of Imperial patriotism burns more brightly than in that of Mr. Seddon; but, while I should be the last person to say that it is no part of the duty of a self-governing colony to interfere in the affairs of the Empire, I would go further and say that I think we have suffered in the past because too little interest has been taken in the general affairs of the Empire by its several component parts. I recollect well that in 1887, when the first Colonial Conference was held, a gentleman, a native of one of the Australian States, came over to this country full of hot indignation against the manner in which England had treated the interests of Australia, but when he went back he said he had seen the true proportion which Australia bore to the whole of this great Empire, and recognised that he had been unduly critical in what he had said respecting the Government. The noble Marquess drew a distinction between the Australasian Colonies and the Cape. He said the Cape was more entitled to speak upon this subject on account of its propinquity to the Transvaal. The noble Earl said—but he corrected himself afterwards — that he thought there was not a single person in the Cape who was not opposed to this proposal. On the contrary the proposal is approved in several places. It must be remembered that some of the ports, especially East London, depend for their prosperity on the Transvaal, and I think that if the noble Lord paid a visit to East London he would find that there are a great many people there who are distinctly in favour of anything being done which would maintain the prosperity of the Transvaal.

The noble Earl the Leader of the Opposition gave us fair warning, on the first night of the session, that if His Majesty's Government showed any sympathy with two great classes of the community we must expect some opposition on his part. He singled out two—the great industry which deals in intoxicating liquor and the great industry which is carrying on mining in the Transvaal. No doubt the brewers and the publicans deal in an article which occasionally leads to excesses, though I hope in your Lordships' House we look upon it as the cup which cheers but not inebriates. At any rate, it is a perfectly legitimate business. In the same way, although the operation of mining digs up the riches of the earth which in our classical studies we learned were the incentives to evil, yet most of us like to have a little of that wealth, and at any rate it is a great lubricant of that complicated machine which we call our commercial system. I think that neither of those two classes ought to be singled out for special attack. But it is not in any way because the mining magnates, as they are called, are the people who are mainly concerned in the prosperity of the Transvaal that we ask your Lordships to sanction this Ordinance. It is because by generating the mining industry you create the great motive power which will stir into activity all the other industries of the Transvaal, including that of agriculture.

If by any action of this House the prosperity of the Transvaal is crippled, as I believe it will be by a refusal to sanction the Ordinance, you will have no more reason to make railways or roads. The profits of every farmer, be he British or Dutch, will disappear. As Mr. Birchenough has pointed out, it is not the mines only. As he said, the danger of the situation lies in the prolongation of the present financial strain. It is a race against time. The whole industrial and commercial interests of the Transvaal are involved, and not only the interests of the financial houses. The evidence given before the Commission will strike different people in different ways. The noble Marquess has derived the impression from reading it that there is no unanimity in the Transvaal on this subject. I confess it strikes me in an exactly contrary way. It seems to me, from all I have seen, that the great preponderating opinion throughout the length and breadth of the Transvaal is that, unpleasant and unsatisfactory as it is to have recourse to Chinese labour, it is the only thing which will save the Transvaal from going down-hill to ruin. We have passed through crises in the history of our Colonies not dissimilar from that which we see in the Transvaal. We have learned, or we ought to have learned, many lessons from history. I will not take your Lordships back to the tea chests which were thrown over into Boston harbour, but I will say that whenever Parliament or the Secretary of State has attempted to dictate to a great colony on the eve of self-government, Parliament or the Secretary of State has invariably been foiled, and all that they have succeeded in doing has been in exasperating the opinion of our fellow subjects in the colony. I hope we are not going to repeat the mistakes which were made by our ancestors. You may impose your view on the Transvaal, against the will and wishes of the people, but if you do you will in the end inevitably fail, as you have failed in the past in Canada, Australia, and at the Cape.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN: My Lords, I only interpose for one moment to make a correction. The noble Earl, Lord Carrington, referred to the poll tax on Chinamen in British Columbia. I have ascertained that the tax has been raised to 500 dollars, having formerly been 100 dollars. It is now equivalent to £100.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER: My Lords, I have listened with great admiration to the spirited and effective as well as kindly-natured and good-tempered speech which has just been delivered by the noble Earl, and we, who feel anxious about this matter, are very grateful to him for the manner in which he has treated what I may call its moral difficulties. He has shown us—I, for my part, certainly did not need showing—that those who are responsible here for these proposals have the most sincere and the most earnest intention of making them work satisfactorily and well. No one has more reason than myself to believe that the Secretary of State and his advisers are fully alive to the serious nature of this matter. The thing we have got to ask ourselves is whether that good intention is altogether sufficient. We have learned from the noble Earl more in detail of the kind of securities the Government are able to take. They are the securities of very high and independent opinion applied to the details of the matter. The counsel of Sir Frank Swettenham and of the other expert, Mr. Evans, the Protector of Chinese, given to Lord Milner, is intended to secure in every possible way the interests of the Chinese labourer. When I ask myself whether that is quite sufficient to make me happy, when I ask myself whether, bearing in mind some of the past incidents of coolie labour, and some of the incidents of Chinese life out of their own country, these securities are satisfactory, I see one or two difficulties.

The first difficulty which I see is the very strength of the case made out by the noble Earl opposite (Earl Grey) for the necessity of this proceeding. I see in that a motive and a force which, worked very powerfully first upon the Government, and then by the Government upon the House, will, if I am not mistaken, work again and again at later stages of the matter. It is largely a financial pressure. I am not going to be so presumptuous as to discuss whether there is, or is not, an emergency. I am very ready to believe that there is, and that it is a financial emergency. The noble Duke I thought last night used rather an unfortunate expression when he said that the Government had no concern with the profits of this or that mine-owner, but that the Government were satisfied if the shareholders were contented. It was not altogether a happy phrase, though I quite saw what the noble Duke meant. He meant, I think, that he was not in the least concerned to get big dividends for the mine-owners, but to keep the mines going, and that in order to keep them going you must do this or that. That is the argument which I venture to think may be brought to bear at later stages upon our responsible administrators at home or in the Colonies. They may be told, when they are getting the Chinese, that if they pay more than a certain amount for bringing over wives and families it will be impossible to work the mines. There is also some reason to think they will be told that, unless they bring so many more, until the total has become very formidable indeed, the mines will not be able to be worked, and evil consequences will follow. Therefore, I do not think it is quite a matter for surprise if, with utmost confidence in the intentions of the Government at home, and the most complete confidence in the intentions of Lord Milner and the Lieutenant-Governor out there, we cannot feel perfectly at ease in our minds.

And then there is this other reason, which, I think, counts for something. You are going to bring a number of members of a less advanced race—a race, as I understand it, of singularly mixed characteristics, with some rather eminent virtues of industry and so forth, but also with some qualities of a very different kind—and settle them in the midst of the life of a rising colony of our own, and in the midst of a race for whom we are deeply and seriously responsible. What will be the effect? We have had discussions as to whether the men are to come by themselves, or whether they are to bring their families. We have had a proposal from Mr. Ross Skinner that the head men should be allowed to bring their families, and some others. We know that that was merely a suggestion. It may be urged with plausibility that no Government can compel families to come if they do not want to come. We are not at all secure against a Chinese barrack life being started there, and there are many palpable dangers in that. Is it going to be an open life, or a closed life? I do not myself understand how the forty eight hours provision in the Ordinance is going to work; but if it means that it is an open life, then I would submit that a very large influence indeed upon the moral life of the community, of the black race, could be exercised by the infusion of the yellow race under that provision. On the other hand, if I have misunderstood the forty-eight hours clause, and it is only intended to be used in rare cases, and the Chinese are to be ordinarily shut up in their compounds, then I certainly believe that there is reason to fear that very grave moral evil will arise, and I am sure that those who have given their attention, as the Secretary of State has given his and other members of the Government have given theirs, to the question, know quite as well as I do, if not a great deal better, what the nature of that is and how great is its probability.

It has been said, though not in this debate, that what is proposed is to have a Chinese village. There are noble Lords in the House who can tell us what Chinese villages are like. I am quite prepared to hear that they are quiet, well-conducted places; but what security have we that we shall get anything like a Chinese village in a compound connected with a mine? For these reasons I cannot say that my anxieties are altogether allayed. I do think that this debate will have had some very real value. I do not suppose it was needed to increase the intention of those in power to carry out this matter in a satisfactory way, but I feel quite sure of this, that there are many parts of society, some represented in this House but many more unrepresented, in which, if we took hold of the first man we met and put to him this question, "Are you content with this proposal to work the Transvaal mines by Chinese labour?" you would find that he would regard the proposal with repugnance and almost with disgust. It may be necessary to get over that feeling, but I do think we have done well to challenge here, and to challenge very plainly, the attitude of the Government upon this question. I am not quite sure whether the noble Earl who has just sat down might not have gone a little further than he has gone. He has told us it is impossible to table to-night all the regulations which the Colonial Governor, with his advice, will come to. I can understand that; but I do not see why we could not be given, on certain points of the greatest anxiety, such definite securities and assurances, if they exist, as would have sent us away more entirely at ease on the matter than we now can be.

*LORD STANMORE: My Lords, at this late hour I do not wish to trespass on your Lordships' time, but as very many of the best years of my life have been employed in removing from indentured immigrants in British Colonies restrictions infinitely less harsh than those which it is now sought to impose, perhaps I may be permitted, without presumption, to say a few words on the subject. My noble friend, Lord Ripon, has brought under the consideration of the House two separate questions. The greater question is whether Chinese immigrant labour should be employed in the Transvaal at all; the other question is whether the Ordinance under which that importation is to be regulated is one which ought to be recommended for His Majesty's sanction. On the first and main question I shall say but little. It is admittedly, as the most rev. Primate told us last night, a very difficult and hard question to tackle; but this I may say, and I am quite sure my noble friend, Lord Ripon, who has filled the office of Secretary of State for the Colonies, will not disagree with me, that in many places the system of coloured immigration into British Colonies has been, is, and I hope will continue to be, of the greatest benefit both to the colony itself and to the immigrants introduced into it. It is nevertheless a system which is always open to abuse, and which always requires checks and guards to prevent such abuse. It is perfectly legitimate when the object of the introduction of immigrants is simply to supply a want of labour which would otherwise be altogether absent. That was the condition under which such immigration was first introduced into the West Indies. But it becomes illegitimate when the immigrants are imported, not to supply labour which would otherwise be wanting, but to supply cheap labour instead of labour at the ordinary rate of wages. It is perfectly legitimate, again, when it is devised and carried out in the interests of both employer and employed; it is illegitimate when it is devised for the benefit of the employer only.

Now on those points the two sides of the House appear to join issue. My noble friend Lord Ripon seems to contend that the immigration in the circumstances of the Transvaal is illegitimate. He does not deny—indeed, I do not see how anyone can deny—that there is, and must be, a great want of labour in the Transvaal, and his opposition was rather based upon the ground of the proposal being unpopular and distasteful to the people of the country than on the ground that an ample supply of labour already existed. I think there can be no doubt that there is a shortage of labour in the Transvaal, for the idea of filling the mines with white labour is hardly one that could be seriously maintained. Again, much of the local opposition to Asiatic immigration comes from those who desire to force into the mines by compulsory legislation, the native population of the province, a course which I am sure my noble friend would deprecate equally with myself. Therefore, on the point whether the importation of coolie labour is necessary or unnecessary, I, for one, should feel bound to give great weight to the opinions of the Commission, the Transvaal Legislature, Lord Milner, and His Majesty's Government. But when we come to the other question, when we come to look at the Ordinance by which it is proposed to render this importation of Chinese labour legal, I take a very decidedly unfavourable view of its character. I deeply lament the absence of one who no longer sits on our Benches, or belongs to this House—I mean the late Lord Kimberley, who for many years led this House both in Office and in Opposition. Lord Kimberley with his almost unrivalled experience of the Colonial Office with his perfect knowledge of the immigration laws, would, had he been still with us, have torn this Ordinance to shreds in a way that I cannot pretend to do. For the Ordinance is not only, as Lord Ripon said last night, without precedent—a statement which I venture to repeat, notwithstanding the denial of the noble Earl who was at one time Under-Secretary for the Colonies (the Earl of Onslow)—but it is contrary to, and in the teeth of, almost all the precedents of similar legislation. It differs from them not only in details but in principle.

These Immigration Ordinances had their origin some sixty years ago. The late Lord Grey, the late Sir James Stephen, the late Lord Blatchford, and the late Sir Henry Taylor were their chief authors. They drew up these laws on principles to which the Ordinance under discussion is entirely opposed. They laid down certain principles which all Immigration Ordinances were to embody. Now, what were those principles, and how far are they observed in this Ordinance? Those principles were, first, that the contract between the labourers to be employed and their employers was to be a voluntary and free one; that every immigration of labourers was to be accompanied by a certain fixed proportion of women; that in the contract itself there were to be provisions which were laid down with regard to pay, rations, and accommodation; and, above all, that they were to be regarded as free men who were to have their own time at their own disposal when not employed in the work for which they were engaged. Now, these were the principles on which the immigration system was founded.

Let us see how they compare with the provisions of this Ordinance. There are, I venture to think, not many noble Lords who have read or drafted a greater number of Immigration Ordinances, or have formed more digests of them than I have—my friend Lord Knutsford may have done so—and I say without fear of contradiction that, at all events until very recent times, of which I know nothing, in every Immigration Ordinance of every colony there were clauses which enacted that certain things were to be placed in the contract of service. I find no such corresponding clauses in this Ordinance. On the contrary, the only clauses which this Ordinance requires to be put into the contract are the restrictive clauses—the clauses that the labourers are not to work at any other kind of labour, that they are only to serve the person introducing them or such person as he may transfer them to; that they are to return to the country of origin, and that they are to be subject to such and such provisions. But where are the clauses as to wages? In all the other contracts to which I refer there is a provision, either that the wage was not to be less than a certain amount, or that it should be at the rate of wages given to labourers not under indenture serving in the same district. I need not say how such a provision as that would work in the present case; but, as far as I can see, there is no provision that in the contract there shall be such a sum fixed to be paid as shall be really a living wage. Nor is there any limitation of labour. In the Ordinances I speak of provision is made that work shall be required only on 280 days in the year and for only nine hours a day. Under this Ordinance the labourer may be apparently employed every day of the year and for as many hours as his employer—I was about to say his owner—chooses.

Then comes the question of transfer. Now, in most of the Ordinances to which I have referred—the Ordinances that were in vogue for many years—you will find that there is a provision that the transfer is not to take place without the consent of the party transferred. There is no such provision here. There is no provision in this Ordinance for consent. Anyone may transfer to any other person. Well, that is not all. For decency's sake a provision is put in that no pecuniary consideration shall be given for such a transfer. I know well by experience how many opportunities there are for the evasion of such a provision. This is the sort of thing which will happen. An employer of labour wishes to get rid of his labour. Another gentleman is desirous of having that labour on his estate, but must not buy it. Oh, no, that is not to be thought of. But the gentleman to whose estate the labourers are to be transferred takes a great fancy, curiously enough, to a horse belonging to the gentleman from whose estate they are coming. The horse is one to which the owner attaches a sentimental value, and he will not part with it except for a consideration which he, of course, considers is prohibitive; but such is the wish of the other party to take it that he will pay the prohibitive price, and, much against his will, no doubt, the owner of the horse has to surrender. Such a provision as this for the transfer from one employer to another, though not slavery (for I recognise the distinction) is certainly serfdom. Depend upon it under this clause men will be bought and sold.

Next, with regard to the question of the passport. I quite admit that the noble Earl the late Under-Secretary for the Colonies was correct in saying that a passport was required in many colonies, but to say that that was the same sort of passport as is here contemplated is quite wrong. There was a tendency in this direction in Mauritius, but a Royal Commission which was sent out there, and which examined the whole state of the laws with regard to coolie labour in Mauritius, at once got rid of all those objectionable provisions, and, although the passport was retained, it was retained simply as an instrument which identified the bearer. Then I see in one clause of the Ordinance that the register kept by the employer is apparently the final evidence as to absence from work, desertion, and matters of that sort. Now, that is a very old story. That is the thing that Governors of colonies where immigrant labour has been employed have been fighting from time to time during the last fifty or sixty years, and in most colonies the provisions of the law have been such as to render it necessary to go before a magistrate to have these things proved. There has always been a wish to have it considered that the books of the estate are to be the final proof. That has always been resisted under the old traditions of the Colonial Office, and I should be sorry to think that those old traditions were now going to give place to an entirely new system. So far as I can see, there is in this Ordinance no provision whatever for any appeal to a magistrate or to any court beyond the Inspector, who is apparently to take these books as his sole guide.

Then I come to the point as to the precedent which my noble friend Lord Onslow attempted to show existed in Trinidad, in which colony he said there was a similar provision to that which it is now proposed to make in the Transvaal with regard to residence. He said the labourers were equally compelled to reside on the premises of the employer. I beg the noble Lord's pardon. Nothing of the sort. They were compelled, if you like, to make the estate their home, but they were not obliged to stay there day and night, and to live upon it when they were not engaged in work. They were free to go about on their own amusements as much as they pleased. I was for several years in Trinidad, and I never saw a coolie confined to his establishment when work was over. One case I remember, in Mauritius, of a French planter, who attempted to enforce something of the *régime* which will be enforced under this Ordinance, and did keep his coolies shut up on his premises day and night. What was the result? With the full approval of the Home Government, he was prosecuted before the magistrate's court for illegal detention, and was convicted and imprisoned. There is all the difference in the world between having people resident on the property, but allowing them free action as free men to go about where they like, and to go and buy and sell what they like, and the sort of confinement that is proposed under this Ordinance.

And what do you think the result of that confinement will be? I think I can tell you. But first let me say a word with regard to the subject of permits. These permits are to be given for only forty-eight hours. In some of the regulations which were passed in Mauritius, and which exceeded really their legal powers and were cancelled afterwards, an attempt was made to provide something like that system of permits for forty-eight hours only; that is, they attempted to limit the permit, but there is this to be said, that they provided that the immigrant should be entitled to ask for that permit so many times a year. There is no such provision in this Ordinance. It depends wholly and absolutely on the employer. There is no obligation on him to give such a permit from one year's end to another. The language is all prohibitive. He must not give a permit for more than forty-eight hours, but he need not give any on any day in any year. But suppose that the labourer gets his occasional permit, nevertheless he is mainly retained in the compound of the property. You do not imagine that he will be very contented there. There is no body of men so apt to combine, to conspire, and to plot as Chinamen, and these large bodies of men shut up in an enclosure will plot accordingly. You will get a copy of the Roman *Ergastula* of classic times with all their dangers, all their discontent, all their vices. They will plot and conspire, and in the end may break out, and you will have very unpleasant mutinies and riots; and if that is the case, and they are all put down and are herded together again in these close barracks, they will escape in another way—by suicide. There is nothing a Chinaman is more ready to resort to than suicide. Between thirty and forty years ago there were a large number of Chinamen employed as coolies in British Guiana. Those coolies thought they had certain grievances, and those grievances were inquired into, and to a certain extent confirmed, by a Royal Commission sent from this country, and one of the things which the Royal Commission remarked was the enormous prevalence of suicide among the immigrants on particular estates where they were dissatisfied. If a Chinaman cannot escape in any other way he is prepared to escape by means of death.

In all those immigration laws to which I have referred, and which were carefully drafted, as I have said, on fixed principles laid down by the Secretary of State and his coadjutors, a fixed number of women were always made to accompany the men. Well, in this case the only provision made with regard to women or families is a negative one; and when we are told that Regulations are in contemplation which will alter all that, I beg to inform your Lordships with the most distinct assurance that Regulations cannot do anything of the kind, because they would be absolutely illegal and *ultra vires.* By a regulation you can extend, expand, and carry out a provision of law, but you cannot go against it. You cannot contradict the letter of the law by a regulation, and the words of the Ordinance are explicit—

> "It shall not be lawful for the wife of any member of the family of any labourer or any family belonging to the race or tribe of the labourer introduced, to enter or reside in the Colony unless they be respectively introduced by a duly licensed importer under, as far as practicable, the same conditions and restrictions as provided by the Ordinance."

That is to say that, unless the employer is willing to go to the extra expense of bringing these women over, there is no compulsion in law to bring them over at all, and as the expression in the Ordinance is positively prohibitive, and the exception gives a statutable discretion to the employer, no Regulation can make it obligatory on the employer to import women. It must be optional. Whether he will go to that expense may be doubted. And if he does, what then? By the provision of the Act they must be put to the same labour and to the same work, under the same restrictions and for the same purposes as the men. Are the women to go down and work in the mines? That appears to be the intention. Certainly it is the wording.

And now a word as to the importer of labour so often mentioned. It is a new phrase to me and its definition is somewhat obscure. Taking the importation clause and the transfer clause together, are we to suppose that a shipowner may bring over, say, a thousand immigrants, import them, and then sell them, a hundred to one mine and a hundred to another? It cannot be intended, but under this Ordinance it would, I think, be possible, and it ought to be made impossible.

I do not wish to detain your Lorships longer. [A NOBLE LORD: Hear, hear!] I accept and appreciate that cheer, my Lords, but when a man has given the best years of his life to bringing about an improvement in the condition of the labouring population of many colonies, he may be perhaps allowed to say a few words when he sees his work likely to be undone, even if a junior official is impatient to be gone [cheers.] What I wish to point out is, that the provisions of this Ordinance, as my noble friend said, are unprecedented and unjust in themselves. Why have you chosen Chinese and not Indians, against whom there is this prejudice? I think we know the answer. You know perfectly well that the Indian Government would never allow Indian subjects of the Crown to be subjected to these restrictions which you are going to impose upon the Chinese. And do you think you will get the Chinese? John Chinaman is no fool. He will ask what the conditions are, and when he finds them out I do not think he will come. If he does come, I think he will give you trouble. No, my Lords, if you want to have immigrants from Asiatic countries, if you find it necessary to employ them, and I for one am far from saying that it is not necessary to employ them—I know how beneficial their employment has been elsewhere, and I can conceive that they may be wanted to supply a shortage of labour in the Transvaal—you must get them on fair terms. You must not go to them and say: "We want your labour, but the people of the country we are taking you to will not have anything to do with you, so you must consent to be put in prison and treated almost as criminals." Your employing them at all may be distasteful to you, but if you make up your minds to that distasteful necessity you must make up your mind also to the equally distasteful necessity of treating those whose aid you have invoked as men and not as machines, giving them some pleasure in life and some opportunities of improving their condition. You cannot introduce them and then keep them wholly out of sight in the mines all day and hidden by the compound walls all night. There is one extraordinary clause in this Ordinance which not only prohibits them holding land or keeping a shop, but says they are to have no fixed property. What is fixed property? Are their wages fixed property? It is clear that even if they get their wages paid them they cannot buy anything, for anything so bought clearly would be fixed property. If you wish to employ these people you should treat them fairly. Give them an opportunity of bettering themselves in the country to which they come. You say it is a necessary evil to employ them. Then you must put up also with the necessary evil of employing them in such a way as shall give them fair satisfaction, and shall enable them to live an honest and an industrious life in the country to which they have come, and not keep them simply for the purpose of servile labour and nothing else. Before I close I should like to offer one observation on a point which has not, I think, attracted much attention, I mean the effect on other colonies. In every colony there is a party desirous of greater restrictions upon immigrants. Till now the Colonial Office has manfully refused to allow such restrictions. With what logic or consistency can they continue to refuse to other coolie-employing colonies what they have granted to the Transvaal?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, my two noble friends have stated the case for the Government so fully and in so convincing a manner that I would not have risen at this stage of the debate had not the noble Marquess, during yesterday's discussion, made a very distinct appeal to me on a particular part of the subject before the House. The noble Marquess asked me whether any communications had passed between His Majesty's Government and the Government of China in regard to the importation of these Chinese labourers, and he reminded me that we are under a treaty obligation to communicate with the Chinese Government in respect to such matters. There have been communications between the Foreign Office and the Chinese Government. They have not been numerous; one of them is a letter to the Chinese Minister at this Court inviting his attention to what is proposed, and his suggestions on the subject. The Minister's reply has reached us within the last few hours, and as the noble Marquess is interested in the matter he will perhaps allow me to inform him of its purport. The Minister writes—

> "The Ordinance in question being a measure affecting the internal economy of the Transvaal, I recognise the courtesy and consideration of His Majesty's Government in consulting me in regard to it before it becomes law."

He then proceeds—

> "I am glad to be able to inform your Lordship that I do not find anything in it that is likely to conflict with anything I may have to propose when we come to negotiate the regulations for the supervision and protection of Chinese immigrants provided for in Article 5 of the Treaty of Peking."

The Minister goes on to make one or two practical suggestions which are entirely in accordance with the policy that has been explained. We shall be glad to lay the complete Papers on the Table of your Lordships' House. The Article of the Convention of 1860 which the noble Marquess had in his mind renders it necessary that before Chinese emigrants are allowed to ship there shall be communication between His Britannic Majesty's representative in China and the Chinese provincial authorities in order that proper regulations may be framed for the protection of the emigrants. That is, no doubt, a precaution of a kind, but I am bound to say it seems to me that those who have at heart the welfare of these emigrants would find a better security in the solemn undertaking given them by the Secretary for the Colonies than in any consent that might be obtained from provincial authorities in China. We have been told by my noble friend that Lord Milner, who has already had the advantage of two consultations with Sir F. Swettenham, perhaps the greatest living authority on the subject, will also have the assistance of Mr. Evans, the Protector of Chinese Emigrants. I think we may fairly anticipate that the result of their deliberations will be to give us regulations that will be satisfactory to the right rev. Prelate who spoke just now and expressed so strong a desire that no precaution should be neglected.

I must say that I regret very much that we are not able to respond to the appeal made to us last night by the most rev. Primate. He appealed to us to give, at any rate, a rough outline of the proposed regulations. All these precautionary arrangements are, however, really questions of detail, and it would be altogether premature until the matter has been discussed, as it will be, on the spot, to offer specific assurances. I cannot help saying that it is scarcely reasonable to suggest that the Ordinance should be suspended until these details have been arranged. Those who make that suggestion have failed to recognise the gravity of the crisis. It is not merely a financial crisis, it is a crisis which threatens every industry and pursuit in the colony, and there can be no doubt that unless early relief is given in some shape the result may be disastrous to the Transvaal itself and to the Colonies which adjoin it. The difficulty is entirely a labour one. It has been shown that the supply of local labour has been virtually exhausted. It has also been proved to demonstration that white unskilled labour is prohibitive in cost and impracticable in its application. There remains, therefore, only the alternative of Asiatic labour. We do not propose to resort to that expedient lightheartedly, or because we desire to see what has been called an indiscriminate influx of Asiatics. But we are prepared to try the experiment on a limited scale and fenced in by every precaution which experience can suggest. The only question is whether these precautions are sufficient or not. As to that, may I say that this debate will not offer to those who have honest misgivings on the subject the last opportunity of criticising what is proposed by the Government? Do not let your Lordships lose sight of this, that these regulations will be drafted by the Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony, that the Lieutenant-Governor is responsible to Lord Milner, Lord Milner to the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of State to Parliament, and accordingly whatever is done amiss cannot be withdrawn from the consideration and criticism of Parliament. Therefore there will be abundant opportunities, if these regulations should be found to fall short of what is necessary, of criticising them.

One word more with regard to the manner in which this question is regarded by public opinion in the Transvaal. The noble Marquess last night took considerable exception to what I had said upon this point in the debate on the Address, and he said that no expression of opinion on the part of the Legislative Council of the Colony, and no petitions could make up for or replace an expression of opinion derived from a Colony endowed with representative institutions. Of course, that is perfectly true. I do not mean for a moment to suggest that you can get so conclusive an opinion from the Legislative Council or from any conferences or committees as you can from an elected Legislature. But we are dealing with a Crown colony and must get at public opinion in the best way we can. We have done our best to get at public opinion, and we are profoundly convinced that is, I will not say unanimous, but largely preponderating in favour of the course proposed. I guard myself from saying that public opinion is unanimous for this reason, because I know that in certain quarters these proposals are regarded with misgiving. I understand the Colonial Office propose to lay more Papers on the Table showing what the objections are and what replies can be made to them. We believe that public opinion in the Colony has completely changed in the last few months, and it has changed because it has come home to the people of the Colony that unless this proposal is admitted the Colony is threatened with disaster and ruin. And that is the answer to what was said by the noble Earl who spoke first last night, when he rather unfairly called attention to the fact that Lord Milner has changed his mind. Lord Milner has changed his mind because he has become convinced, as we have, that this thing is inevitable. Lord Milner is an official of unrivalled experience, and your Lordships may be perfectly sure that Lord Milner would not have changed his mind if he had not been convinced that a change of policy is inevitable. We, too, have approached this question with the feeling that the admission of Asiatics was *prima facie* a very doubtful expedient; but we regard it as inevitable, and we rely on the precautions which we are determined to take to make the experiment innocuous to the interests of the Colony.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: My Lords, I do not propose to make anything in the nature of a reply on the debate which has taken place. I am very glad that this subject has been discussed, and I think His Majesty's Government must at least observe that there are some points upon which the feeling in this House, and certainly in the country, is very strong and decided. Therefore, it was with great regret that I heard the noble Marquess say that it would be impossible to withhold the assent to this Ordinance for the present until the very grave questions raised by so many speakers, and especially by the most rev. Primate and the right rev. Prelate who have addressed us in the course of this discussion, in regard to the moral aspect of this question have been settled. I still would venture very earnestly to press on His Majesty's Government to give more consideration than they appear inclined to give to these very serious matters. If the noble Marquess listened to the very important and admirable speech which was delivered just now by my noble friend on the Cross Benches (Lord Stanmore), he must have observed that he showed clearly and beyond dispute that the governing thing in this matter was the Ordinance itself. You may make your regulations, but they cannot supersede the Ordinance, and if the Ordinance forbids any portion of the regulations, the regulations are simply waste paper. That is a very important consideration indeed, and I venture to say that unless the regulations which are made are of a much more decisive, satisfactory, and efficient nature than has been foreshadowed in the course of this discussion, there will arise on this question a very serious and determined expression of public opinion that nothing shall be done which shall be inconsistent with securing, as far as we can, a good moral condition for those who are to be brought in under this Ordinance. I will not add anything to that, but I do earnestly entreat His Majesty's Government to give this part of the question, at all events, their most earnest consideration. It rests wholly upon their responsibility. I understood the noble Marquess to say that these regulations would be laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament, and that free opportunity, not only in this House, where we enjoy it, but also in the other House, will be given to discuss the regulations when they are laid before Parliament. I had intended to move for Papers relating to the communications between my noble friend opposite and the Chinese Ambassador, but I understood him to say, not only that he had communicated these to us in part, but that they will be laid on the Table and circulated. In those circumstances I will not press my Motion for Papers.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I cannot be held to make any pledge as to what will be done in the other House of Parliament on the subject.

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

House adjourned at a quarter to Eight o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 12th February, 1904.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Lincolnshire and Yorkshire Electric Power Bill; Plymouth Corporation Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz:—Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill; Great Eastern Railway Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz:—Thames Steamboat Trust Bill; Wellington (Somerset) Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time,

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the list reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, he has certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with in the following case, viz:—Ilford Urban District Council.

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Brierley Hill; Cradley Heath; Dudley; Worcester; Quarry Bank; Plymouth; Bedminster; Maesteg; Leigh; Wimborne (two); Seven Dials; Tryddyn (five); Leeswood (three); Clwyd; Newmarket; Rhuallt; Cilcain; Sychtyn; Nether Kellet; Hebburn; Earlestown; Perth Wilson; Milnrow; Penzance; Coventry; Littleborough (two); Bryn; Flint; Rhyl; Higher Broughton; Clynnog; Portdinorwic; Glasgow (two); Walsden; Saffron Walden; Lockerbie; Crowton; Chester; Pentre; Gwespyr; Llanegryr; Bedlington; Stirling; Glen Albyn; Royton (two); Tyldesley; Borthygest; Brynmenai; Corwen; Petersfield; Stockport; Brighouse; Elland; Broughton; Greenock; Aberporth; Halifax; Totnes; Yelverton; Shepton Mallet; Cornwood; Elvet; Abergwili; and Bristol; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 4th February, 1904, granting a retired allowance to Edward Joseph Carey, late a messenger in the Office of the Chief Secretary, Dublin Castle, under the Act [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

THIBET (TRADE STATISTICS).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 9th February; *Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 48.]

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

Copy ordered, "of Account showing the gross amount received and the gross amount expended in respect of the Telegraph Service, from the date of the transfer of the Telegraphs to the State to the 31st day of March, 1902 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 31, of session 1903)."—(*Lord Stanley.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 49.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Crime in Liverpool.

MR. CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state for the city of Liverpool for the years 1890, 1899, and the last year for which statistics are available, the number of prosecutions for drunkenness; the total number of crimes known to the police; the number of offences against the person; and the number of offences against property, giving in each case the proportion per 100,000 of population; and whether he will state the number of licences not renewed by the licensing justices in the city on any ground between 1890 and 1899, and between 1899 and the latest year for which statistics of crime are available.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) The information desired by the hon. Member is as follows:—

Offences.	Numbers.			Proportion per 100,000 of Population.		
	1890.	1899.	1902.	1890.*	1899.†	1902.†
Persons prosecuted for Drunkenness...	14,680	4,069	5,115	2,393	642	739
Crimes (Indictable Offences) (Known to the Police) Total Number ...	4,227	3,504	4,234	689	552	611
Offences against the Person (Class I. of Criminal Statistics)	407	138	154	66	22	22
Offences against Property (Classes II. to V.)	3,721	3,249	3,925	607	512	567

* Census 1891. † Estimated Population.

In considering these figures it must be borne in mind that without full knowledge of all the circumstances and conditions it is impossible to say how far the number of prosecutions for drunkenness can be taken as an index to the amount of drunkenness. The decrease of prosecutions for drunkenness at Liverpool in 1899 is discussed in the Introduction to the Criminal Statistics for 1899, pages 17, 70, and 73. The number of licences not renewed (whether refused, surrendered, or not applied for) was 214 for the years 1890 to 1898 and 195 for the years 1899 to 1903.

Drunkenness in England and Wales.

MR. CORBETT: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will state the number of persons tried for drunkenness in England and Wales for the average of the five years 1892 to 1896, and for the average of the five years 1897 to 1901, and the numbers for the year 1901, and, if yet available, for the years 1902 and 1903, and the proportions of each figure per 100,000 of population.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) The information for which my hon. friend asks is to be found, up to the year 1901, in Table D of the Criminal Statistics for 1901 (p. 31), viz., annual average number of persons prosecuted for drunkenness in England and Wales for the years 1892-6, 175,627, being a proportion of 583·47 per 100,000 of the population; for the years 1897-1901, 204,940, or a proportion of 642·87. In 1901 the number was 210,342, a proportion of 644·84. The figures for 1902 are 209,908, a proportion of 636·16. The statistics for 1903 are not yet available.

Land Purchase Acts—Rejected Applications for Advances.

MR. P. A. McHUGH (Leitrim, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many applications for advances under the Purchase of Land Acts, 1885 and 1888, were rejected prior to the 31st March, 1900, for insufficiency of security as distinguished from other causes of rejection; how many applications for advances under the Purchase of Land Acts, 1891 and 1896, were rejected up to 31st March, 1903, for insufficiency of security; and what was the amount of the applications so rejected.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The number of applications for advances under the Acts of 1885 to 1888 which were finally refused on the ground stated was 1,286; the amount applied for was £467,872. Fresh applications were subsequently made in respect of a number of these cases under the Acts of 1891 to 1896, but no separate record of these has been kept. The number of applications finally refused under the latter Acts, to the 31st March, 1903, was 789 for £175,154.

Naturalisation of Foreign Seamen.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will consider the advisability of keeping a record of the number of seamen naturalised in this country under the regulations issued on the 4th August last showing their country of origin, their length of service in the British Mercantile Marine, with, if possible, a note of such as have acquired a domicile in the United Kingdom.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) A record of the aliens to whom the Secretary of State has granted certificates of naturalisation is kept in the Home Office in such a manner that the seamen to whom the right hon. Baronet refers are distinguished from other aliens. This record shows the country of origin, and in the case of seamen the sea-service and the residence in the United Kingdom (for five out of eight years previous to the application for a certificate) required for the purposes of naturalisation. I do not think that any useful object would be gained by elaborating the record further.

Orders for Armour Plate.

MR. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any further reason for delay exists with regard to the distribution of orders for the armour required for the battleships of the current financial year.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) There has been no delay with regard to the distribution of these orders. The provision made in the Navy Estimates did not allow for the placing of the orders before the latter part of the financial year, and this date will fully meet the requirements of the shipbuilding programme. The orders will be placed as soon as the tenders which have been received have had proper consideration.

Twinning System for Turret Guns.

Mr. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether any reports from gunnery officers of the Navy have been received upon the system of twinning the two six-inch guns in turrets of ships of the "County" class together, so that one cannot be fired without the other; and, if so, will he state their purport.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) These twin mountings were the subject of much controversy and consideration when adopted by the previous Board of Admiralty in 1899, but ships of this class have not been long enough in commission for the present Board to have formed any final opinion on the merits of this particular mounting. No reports from gunnery officers on any guns, whether favourable or unfavourable, can be published, as all are confidential.

Belfast Post Office—Promotion of Mr. King.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General, if he will explain under what circumstances was Mr. King of Belfast permitted, on promotion to the rank of clerk, to retain his place on the list of officers selected to perform clerk-in-charge work; and will his retention involve that a senior sorting clerk and telegraphist is deprived of the opportunity of qualifying for promotion.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The former corps of clerks in charge was composed of sorting clerks and telegraphists, and latterly it was a condition of their appointment that they should cease to be clerks in charge if they were promoted to be clerks or received a supervising allowance. In December, 1899, however, the corps of clerks in charge was abolished, and it was decided that an officer of any rank might be employed to take charge of a vacant office if necessary. Mr. King, therefore, remains eligible for such employment if his services are required; and his retention on the list of officers available for taking charge does not in any way interfere with similar employment of a junior officer if the circumstances are suitable.

Sanitary Condition of Central Telegraph Office.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the room containing the A. and B. Divisions Central Telegraphs has been reported as being in a sanitary condition, with good lighting arrangements, and free from overcrowding; and whether, as the officers of the Post Office Medical Department are responsible to the Postmaster-General for the safeguarding of the health of the staff, he will state when the last inspection of this instrument room took place.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The Chief Medical Officer to the Post Office, who has visited the room in question to-day, reports that it is in a sanitary condition and not overcrowed. Owing to the lofty building opposite the electric light has to be used in some parts of the room, but the arrangements made for this purpose are all that could be desired. He has received no complaints from the staff regarding the room. His last previous inspection was made a few months ago.

British Consulate at Jerusalem—Delivery of Mails to British Residents.

Mr. YOXALL: To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what steps have been taken consequent upon the recent inquiry into the condition of H. B. M. Consulate at Jerusalem; and what arrangements are in force for the delivery of letters and packages addressed to British residents there through the post office.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) The inquiry referred to by the hon. Member has convinced the Secretary of State that there are no grounds for taking any further steps in the matter. The English mail is delivered through the Austrian Post Office at Jerusalem.

Saving on Vote for Irish Department of Agriculture.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state approximately what saving will be effected on the Office Vote for the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland for 1903–4.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Department is not in a position at present to give this information.

Operations of Irish Land Act.

MR. P. A. McHUGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can, without going into further particulars, state the average number of years purchase agreed upon by the 3,070 occupiers who have already lodged agreements to purchase under the Irish Land Purchase Act of 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) To obtain this information it would be necessary to examine in detail the terms of purchase in each of these 3,070 cases. I have already stated that such an analysis would impose on the small staff at the disposal of the Estates Commissioners an amount of labour which I cannot at present see my way to ask them to undertake, the more especially at a time when they are burdened with many onerous duties in the administration of an Act which has so recently been brought into operation. Reports of the proceedings of the Commissioners will be duly laid on the Table of the House as required by Section 23 (14) of the Act.

Poisoning of Dogs at Howth.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that a number of dogs have been poisoned at Howth, owing to the manner in which strychnine has been scattered about the neighbourhood; and, if so, will he state what action, if any, has been taken to bring the person or persons to justice.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) A number of dogs in this neighbourhood have recently died from the effects of poison; there is no evidence, however, to show that the poison in these cases was maliciously laid. The police are pursuing their inquiries in the matter. I may add that poison has been placed on the lands of two gentlemen in the locality, but in both of these cases the requirements of the law have been duly observed.

Cases before Rathdrum Land Commissioners.

MR. COGAN (Wicklow, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that a number of land cases were heard by the sub-commissioners in Rathdrum, county Wicklow, last October, and that their decisions were published recently, he will say how many cases were decided, what was the total amount of first-term rents, what the reduced amount for second-terms, and what was the average reduction given.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The number of first-term rents fixed was five. The aggregate formal rental was £298 14s. 0d., the judicial rental £234 16s. 6d., and the percentage of reduction 21·3. The number of second-term rents fixed was thirty-seven. The aggregate formal rent was £2,759 8s. 6d., the judicial rental £2,222 2s. 6d., and the percentage of reduction 19·5.

Output of Gold in Transvaal during January.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state, or if he will ascertain by telegraph, what was the total output of gold in the Transvaal in the month of January.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) The output was 288,824 oz., value £1,226,846.

Asiatic Labour in the Transvaal.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a limitation will be put to the number of labourers that can be imported under the Transvaal Ordinance; and whether a term of years will be fixed after which this exceptional system of obtaining labour will be brought to an end.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) It is not proposed to make such limitations, which are not contained in the Ordinance.

Mr. BUCHANAN: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will ascertain whether any further Amendments have been introduced into the Labour Ordinance since Lord Milner's telegram of 6th February and communicate them to the House; and will he have laid before the House a Report of the proceedings in the Legislative Council on the Second Reading and subsequent stages of the discussion before the House pronounces its opinion on the Ordinance.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I am making inquiry by telegraph, but I have no doubt whatever that no further Amendments have been made. I will lay the proceedings upon the Table when received, but I am not prepared to make any change in regard to what I have already stated to be the procedure which will be followed respecting the discussion of the question of Asiatic labour.

ADJOURNMENT.

Resolved, That this House, at the rising of the House this day, do adjourn till Monday next.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

[Ninth Day.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament.—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being.'"—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. BELL (Derby) said that when his speech was interrupted on the previous night by the adjournment of the debate, he was explaining by what means organised labour in this country had expressed itself against the proposals now under consideration, and he wished now to point out how even the unorganised workmen, though they had no direct medium through which to make their views known, had at the by-elections very distinctly pronounced against a policy which was ostensibly put forward for their benefit. The Secretary to the Board of Trade in his very able and remarkable speech, endeavoured to show how manufacturers in protectionist countries produced a hundred tons of some commodity, of which seventy-five tons was for home consumption, while the remaining twenty-five tons was dumped on the British market at a price actually below the cost of producing it here. But the hon. Gentleman never gave any reasons why we accepted those dumped goods. Personally he did not believe that any section of the British nation purchased these commodities except for the reason that they required them either for consumption or for manufacturing purposes. The dumping of these goods worked to our advantage in more ways than one. In the first place, they employed our shipping and our railways and enabled our manufacturers to compete with the foreigner in other markets. He would cite a glaring illustration of the direct advantage of dumping, and of the manner in which it injured those who dumped. A short time ago he saw an extract from a Report of the United States Consul at Frankfort, to the effect that the German papers were complaining that their manufacturers had been beaten by English manufacturers in a competition for the construction and erection of gasometers at Copenhagen. The German bid was £11,250, while the English tender was only £10,930, and it was explained that the English manufacturer had to obtain his iron from Germany; that, in fact, by means of iron "dumped" by Germany on this country he was able to tender at a lower figure and to employ British labour in constructing the gasometers and erecting them at Copenhagen. Now, a small import tariff on that German iron would have prevented the British firm getting the contract, and British labour would have suffered to that extent. He had another statement he would like to call attention to. Mr. Arthur Chamberlain, the brother of the ex-Colonial Secretary, in addressing recently the shareholders of a large firm with which he was connected, said that British manufacturers either would not or could not supply them with the steel they required for the manufacture of tubing. The firm in question employed 10,000 men, and a 10 per cent. tariff on imported steel would add 30s. per ton to the cost of the tubes, thereby making it increasingly difficult for them to compete with the foreigner. It was all very well to declare that the purchase of steel for manufacturing purposes, or of raw material from the foreigner deprived some of our workmen of employment. No doubt it did to some extent, but he ventured to assert that it enabled the employment of considerably more than it displaced, and, as Mr. Arthur Chamberlain had pointed out, in that one case the purchase of German steel enabled his firm to compete successfully with foreign tubemakers and to give employment to some 10,000 men who otherwise would not have had it.

They had heard a good deal about the effect of protective and preferential tariffs in securing more regular and remunerative employment for the workers of this country, but it was a noteworthy fact that the pig-iron imported from Canada into this country was about equal in amount to that obtained from all other parts of the world, and if, in order to prevent foreigners sending any to this country, we put on a protective tariff, the inevitable result would be that Canadian makers would increase their prices and get control of the market. Where in that case would the benefit to the home workers come in? It could not make much difference to them if the iron were dumped by Germany or Belgium or by Canada; they would not get any more employment or any increase of pay. It was estimated that the pig-iron imported into this country represented the output of four Canadian furnaces, and of five furnaces in other parts of the world, so that if we prohibited the importation of pig-iron we should have to set to work nine blast furnaces to produce at home an equivalent quantity. They had been told that the decay of our industries was due to the lack of energy on the part of employers, and he noticed in an article in a recent issue of "British Industries" a statement to the effect that in England the output of a blast furnace was 25,000 tons a year against an average of 61,000 tons for the American furnace, the difference being due to the more modern appliances adopted in the States.

Reference had been made by many speakers to the fact that our exports were decreasing while our imports were increasing. But there were reasons for decrease of our exports other than those which had been advanced, and he would suggest a very simple explanation of the fact that our exports had not increased in recent years of exceptional prosperity. Wages had been high, and there had been an increased demand in the home market in consequence of the improved position of the working classes. He had a letter from a working man, giving a list of the things which he had been able to buy in the years between 1892 and 1898, and that list included a piano at twenty-eight guineas, a suite of furniture at six guineas, a bookcase at two guineas, a carpet at four guineas, a fender, 25s., spring bedstead, three guineas, a bicycle, eight guineas, and so on. Thus one working man during a period of prosperity spent all that money in order to furnish his home, thereby creating a market for home industries and lessening the quantity of the goods available for export. Was it not probable that thousands of others acted in a like manner. He thought that if the tariff reformers, who were pushing forward their campaign with so much energy, would divert their efforts to other channels with a view of extending the number of men who acted as this working man had done it would be far better for the country at large. We are now spending £180,000,000 yearly on drink alone, and of that, £110,000,000 was said to come out of the pockets of the working classes. If by advocating temperance they could induce the worker to spend his money on home comforts rather than on drink, there would be very little to export. Facts and figures did not bear out the statement that protectionist countries were so much more prosperous than ourselves. The manufacture of pig-iron in the United States had fallen off very seriously—to the extent of something like 70,000 tons a month, and the New York correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, in November last, said a large percentage of the smelting works were being forced to discontinue operations.

The Colonial Secretary, speaking on the previous evening, put himself in the position of a glass worker earning £2 a week. But was not the right hon. Gentleman aware that for every workman in this country who earned £2 weekly, there were seven who got considerably less and certainly three who did not get more than £1 a week, so that the standard of living he had set up was not the average standard. They had been given to understand that a protected country was simply a paradise—a garden of orchids where everything was beautiful and nothing was wanting. Yet America clearly was not so prosperous as had been suggested. He would not stop his comparison there. He would take the case of protected continental countries. Herr R. E. May's Report upon the Gerresheim Glass Works stated that in 1900 their exports of bottles were 37,500,000, or 34·2 per cent. of the total, whereas in 1901 they fell to 29,250,000, or 29·7 per cent. The cause of the decrease, he said—

> "Is the tariff, and especially our diminished capacity for competing owing to dear fuel. The fact that neighbouring countries can get German coal at cheaper rates than we have to pay in this country means that our industry is being progressively driven out of the world's market."

Which of those statements were they to accept. It was very difficult to reconcile the two, and according to the German statement the decay in the glass industry was more progressive in Germany than in England. Again, the foreign workman living under protective tariffs was said to be much better off than the British workman, but the facts did not bear out that statement. The respective wages in London and Berlin were—of pattern-makers, 42s. and 21s.; of brass-moulders, 36s. and 26s. 7d.; cabinetmakers, 42s. 8d. and 28s. 6d. He admitted that wages were considerably higher in America, but the purchasing power of money was much smaller, and, having examined into the matter, at any rate so far as railway-men were concerned, he was prepared to say that he would rather be a railwayman in England at 30s. a week than a railway-man in America at £4. Then there was the condition of the textile workers in France. According to the description which he had, the father and mother each earned 12s. a week; there were five children, aged twelve, nine, eight, six, and three years respectively. Rent represented 1s. 7½ .; potatoes, 1s. 2d.; groceries, including sugar and coffee, 4¾d.; meat, 2s. 10d.; bread, 3s. 2½d.; washing, 9½d.; clothing, 1s. 7½d.; milk for the children, 6½d.; help for the children whilst the mother was at work, 1s. 7½d.; a total of 17s. 9¾d. per week. The conditions of the workers in this country, while not satisfactory, were far above that standard, and he was convinced that if either the official or unofficial fiscal proposals were adopted in this country it would be considerably against the interest of the working classes. It would be ridiculous for representatives of labour to take up an attitude of opposition to a protective tariff or anything else if it would really improve the condition of the workers. They were engaged by the workers themselves; their salaries were paid by the workers in order that they should consider these things and give their advice as to the best course to be pursued in the workers' interest; consequently they would be neglecting their duty if they did not conscientiously consider these questions and advise according to the conclusions at which they arrived. He opposed the proposals because he was absolutely convinced that any change—for the present at all events—in the direction of preferential or protective tariffs would be most injurious to the interests of the workers. The position of the German, as compared with that of the English worker, might be gathered from the 1902 report of the Factory Inspector at Leipzic, in which it was stated—

> "The economic conditions of the workers have not improved during the past year. Since the incomes of many workpeople have undergone a further diminution, partly owing to reduction of wages and partly owing to curtailment of hours of work, and since the prices of the most important articles of food have increased, the endeavour to economise shows itself in the diminution of the consumption of meat and the large demand for horse flesh."

Millions of working-men in this country were unable to get much meat at present, but what little they did get was, he hoped, good and wholesome, and he had no desire to see them following the example of the Germans and eating horse-flesh, dog-flesh, or anything of that sort. Articles were purchased because they were cheap. Manufacturers purchased foreign manufactured and partially manufactured goods because they were cheap. Why did not British manufacturers, who always held themselves up as being foremost for patriotism, purchase British instead of German steel? They would probably answer that according to natural laws they bought the cheapest. But surely if they desired to put a tariff on that cheap steel they would ultimately have to pay for it the price now asked for British steel. Might they not, therefore, as well buy it first as last, and so create a demand for British steel? They felt, however, that if they paid the price, they would not be able to compete with the makers of cheap steel in other countries. Hence the same results would accrue if protective tariffs were imposed on the imported article and the cost of production increased here. Even in the Colonies the people found that tariffs were not always to their advantage, as the following extract from the *Toronto Globe* for 25th December would show—

> "A large assemblage of unemployed workmen, skilled and unskilled, gathered together at short notice, reveals a decided fluctuation in the labour market. The attitude of the Government should be neutral. The workmen have already the advantage of the law preventing the importation of labour under contract, but that is counterbalanced by the tariff on goods, which, so far as it is protective, tends to improve the position of the employer."

That quotation showed that in a period of depression a protective tariff was to the advantage not of the workman but of the employer. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had been asked how his proposals would benefit railway men. Unfortunately, railway men were not the only workers who were not producers. A large majority of the working population of the country were in the same position. All these, including shop assistants and other business people, would be adversely affected by the imposition of a tariff. But in reference to railway men, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Railway men, like all others who do not live by invested capital, depend for their subsistence on their daily employment. When there is too little employment in the country railway receipts fall off, railway men's wages go down, and railway men are dismissed. On the contrary, if there is plenty of trade there is more employment."

Whatever authority the ex-Colonial Secretary might be on some matters, he was not a greater authority on railway matters than he (the speaker) was. For sixteen years he had served the Great Western Railway Company, and on five occasions had represented his fellow-workers before the Directors. Members interested in railway companies would admit that the period 1899, 1900–1, was one of exceptional prosperity from the railway point of view; the companies were unable to carry with any despatch the whole of the traffic they were required to take. What was the result? At the same time the companies had to pay such high prices for fuel and other commodities that their dividends were no higher, if as high, as before; and consequently the railway men, when they applied for an advance of wages, were told that the companies could not afford to accede to their request. But under a protective tariff the railway companies would have to pay more for all the commodities they required, and, as they could not get more traffic than they had in the period to which he had referred, they would have no balance out of which to pay additional wages to the men. He could hardly suggest what would be the result if protective tariffs were adopted and the railway companies went to the manufacturers and said: "You are getting higher prices for the goods you manufacture, and we ask you a higher rate for the carriage of such goods." He was inclined to believe there would be great resentment felt even by the manufacturers who benefit by the tariff, and certainly by the travelling public, who would have to pay higher fares. For these reasons he suggested that railways, at any rate, and those directly concerned in them, were not going to benefit at all, but were going to lose considerably if any such proposal was adopted. He would like to call attention to the way in which events repeated themselves. In Macaulay's "History of England" they found that there happened to be a Mr. Chamberlayne in the House of Commons in 1693, and he said—

> "There would be no taxes, and yet the Exchequer would be full to overflowing. There would be no poor rates, for there would be no poor. The income of every landowner would be doubled. The profits of every merchant would be increased,"

and so on in those days. The present Mr. Chamberlain, speaking at Liverpool, said—

> "I believe that some change of the kind I propose will put money in the pockets of you all. I believe that it will put wages in the pockets of the working classes. I believe that it will restore industries which we ought to have, and I say to you what is deep in my heart, that for that part of the subject, although I am bound to devote to it a great deal of attention, I care much less than for that other side (the imaginative side), and one on which I may appeal to you who are occupied in business houses, for surely you are something more than business men; you are Britons; you are patriots."

Now those words were practically the same as were used by the gentleman in 1693, who was not exactly a namesake, because his name was spelt differently, but whose name was similar in pronunciation to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. It was very remarkable that they should have these speeches and promises; but he had not yet been convinced by all the able speeches that had been made in this House—by those who supported either the proposals of the Government or the proposals outside the official programme—that the masses of the country would benefit by the change if it was made. He was going to quote two authorities for this. One considered itself a great authority, and as to the other there might be a difference of opinion with regard to its consistency. The first was the *Daily Mail*, which immediately after the ex-Colonial Secretary's speech at Birmingham said—

> "Before we had free importation of foodstuffs the poorest classes were not merely on the verge of starvation, they were actually starving; there were bread riots throughout England, and the nation was on the brink of rebellion. The free importation of foodstuffs and raw materials laid the foundation of our manufacturing and industrial prosperity, and that condition is as essential to our success to-day as ever it was.

The *Mail* had changed its opinion now, as it had frequently done, but that at any rate was his opinion and his conviction from which he had not changed. He was a poor hand at perorations, and, therefore, when convenient, he occasionally borrowed a peroration. The hon. Member for the Brightside Division made a speech last night that was full of perorations; at any rate there were so many that a number of Members on this side of the House rose several times, thinking each peroration was the end of the speech. He had borrowed as his peroration a peroration of the late Colonial Secretary which conveyed his conviction, his honest belief. The right hon. Gentleman, speaking on this subject in the House of Commons on 12th August, 1881, said, and he endorsed every word of it—

> "I can conceive it just possible, although it is very improbable, that under the sting of great suffering, and deceived by misrepresentations, the working classes might be willing to try strange remedies, and might be foolish enough to submit for a time to a proposal to tax the food of the country, but one thing I am certain of: if this course is ever taken, and if the depression were to continue, or to recur, it would be the signal for a state of things more dangerous and more disastrous than anything which has been seen in this country since the repeal of the Corn Laws. A tax on food would mean a decline in wages. It would certainly involve a reduction in their productive value; the same amount of money would have a smaller purchasing power. It would mean more than this, for it would raise the price of every article produced in the United Kingdom, and it would indubitably bring about the loss of that gigantic export trade which the industry and energy of the country working under conditions of absolute freedom have been able to create."

I therefore heartily support the Amendment before the House.

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter) said the debate had been most satisfactory in one respect, for it had shown that there was a department of British industry which was still vigorous since forty speeches had lasted rather more than thirty hours. In this direction they had not fallen behind the vigour and stamina of their forefathers. They had not, however, succeeded in obtaining from His Majesty's Government a clear definition of their policy. He heard the speech of the President of the Board of Trade, but the reassuring effect which that declaration made upon him had been largely modified since by attenuating interjections from the President himself, and by other speeches from the Treasury Bench, which sounded a much less clear note of free trade. Before the debate ended the nine muses who, in the absence of Apollo, represented the Government would probably give them compositions in which the leading themes of protection, retaliation, and free trade would be mingled in various proportions. He hoped that the somewhat discordant sounds which had pained and perplexed them during the debate would be resolved in a chord of full harmony. They wanted not only harmony but clear and definite declarations. They wanted to know whether the Government were prepared to defend the cause of free trade against the onset of economic Mahdis. They wanted to know that the policy of retaliation the Government proposed to adopt was a clear and definite issue by itself, that it was self-contained, self-reliant, and self-sufficient, and that it was no mere instalment of a larger and more extensive policy. If he might employ a simile, he would say they were somewhat in the position of sailors about to embark upon a voyage. They had confidence in the captain and in the statements made by the authority of the captain, but their suspicions were somewhat aroused by the character of certain officers of the ship. Their language was far from clear, and there were some of them, like his right hon. friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland or the President of the Local Government Board, who had a bold buccaneer appearance which led them to suspect that they had sailed the Spanish Main under Captain Kidd, and that ordinary commercial gentlemen would not be very safe in their company. It had happened before now that a virtuous and well-meaning captain had been overpowered in mid-ocean and offered the choice between toeing the line or being marooned upon some desert island. That was not an agreeable alternative to set before the Prime Minister, and they desired to save him from it. Therefore, before they put to sea, let them know clearly and definitely what port the ship was bound for. Before he discussed the policy, he should like to pay a tribute to its author. He had a profound admiration for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, but he admired him rather as an orator—and if he might use the term, as a prose poet—than either as an economist or a man of business. He appeared to enjoy to the full the poetical distaste for figures and the oratorical contempt for facts. The truth was that the unrivalled command which he possessed of incisive diction, and the severe restraint he imposed upon his vocabulary gave a pseudo-business appearance to what were in reality lyrical effusions. The form might be prose, but the underlying structure was of the nature of emotional enthusiasm. He was afraid from the declarations of the breezy socialist who delighted certain sections of the House last night that the right hon. Gentleman's successor at the Colonial Office would not prove to be a more reliable guide on economic science.

The new policy divided itself into two sections, the commercial and the Imperial. He would deal first with the commercial. It was suggested that this country should imitate Germany and America and impose a protective tariff against foreign goods. It appeared to him that the physician had prescribed without making a correct diagnosis either of the circumstances or the condition of the patient. He could understand that in the case of a community in a primitive position regarding industrial development, it might be held that industries required the support of protective tariffs. They were unable to compete in the great world markets, and, therefore, they were obliged to confine themselves within their own frontiers. What was England's position? We had gained our wealth and strength by open competition and by world trade. It appeared to him that there were only two theories of commerce—the national theory and the world theory—the theory of the Chinese and the theory of the English. On the one hand, it might be held that the best for the national community was to shut-out communication from the outside, and to deal exclusively with its own people; but the other, and in his judgment the wider and the nobler theory, was that prosperity and wealth were increased by international commerce and by international relations. He could understand the national view of commerce being held by countries which gained nothing from international trade. Was that our case? We gained everything by international trade. We were the world's carriers; we were the world's bankers; we were the world's commission agents. If they divided the commerce of the world into water-tight compartments, they not only considerably restricted and diminished the total body of trade, but entirely destroyed the trade of intermediaries, and that business was one from which we had derived a large portion of our wealth and strength. The policy of the Tariff Reform League had been supported by quotations from the great German writer List, but he submitted, that writer's teaching was altogether opposed to the programme. In 1840 he said—

> "For England free trade is the right policy. a protective system ought not to be the permanent order of things, but temporary and provisional only. It is in fact a means of industrial education carried on at the expense of the nation and ought to cease with the necessity for it."

Therefore the appeal to the teachings of List in their application to England is altogether beside the mark. Again, the Tariff Reform League claim for their policy all the advantages of the retaliation party. They suggest that by our abandoning free trade and adopting protective tariffs we should increase our world commerce and diminish the barrier of foreign tariffs against us. It appeared to him absurd to suppose that by adopting protection here we should do anything else but strengthen protection in foreign countries. Our foreign trade had been largely hampered by protective tariffs abroad, but it still amounted to a considerable figure, and if instead of the free imports we now admitted to this country we imposed a tariff of an average of 10 per cent., it was absolutely certain that foreign protectionists would take advantage of the opportunity, and would increase the barrier that they now placed against our goods to at least an equal extent. They considered that English goods were dumped on their markets just as the tariff reformers here considered that their goods were dumped here. Therefore it appeared to him that the proposed change would aggravate the very evils of which we complained.

In regard to the colonial side of the question, the German Zollverein was quoted as a precedent to be followed, but there was no anaology whatever. The main result, and a beneficial result, of the introduction of the Zollverein in Germany was the entire abolition of internal tariffs. What internal tariffs would be abolished by the introduction of the policy of the Tariff Reform League? Absolutely none. He would go further and say that, so far from diminishing tariffs within the Empire, protection almost necessarily created them. He would endeavour to make this good in a few minutes, but, looking at the thing from a large and general standpoint, what was the trade of the British Empire now? It amounted in the aggregate, including imports and exports, to £1,350,000,000. Of that amount only £200,000,000 was carried on by protectionist communities, while £1,150,000,000 was carried on by free-trade communities. It was proposed in adopting a new scheme of commercial policy that 85 per cent of the British Empire should abandon their practice in order to conform with the practice of 15 per cent. Was not that on the face of it unreasonable? He was convinced that the closer federation of this Empire, which he desired as heartily as any member of the House, could only be effected on a free-trade basis. The advocates of colonial preference, it seemed to him, saw neither fair nor far. They did not see fair because they exaggerated out of all proportion and perspective the importance of Australia and Canada, and they depreciated to an unreasonable extent the importance of the mother country and of all the other colonies, more populous, in some respects more wealthy, and not the less to be regarded because they were less frequently thrust upon public attention. He had said the result of the adoption of the Birmingham programme would be to increase the internal duties within the Empire. The view he took was this, that if free trade was abandoned as the commercial policy of this country, and if protection was taken as the keystone and the watchword, so to speak, of our commercial relations, it must indubitably follow that both in India and South Africa, and other free-trade colonies of the Empire, similar principles must be allowed to prevail. Did they suppose for a single moment that the merchants and manufacturers of South Africa would allow their territory to become the dumping ground of British manufacturers ? Did they imagine for one instant that in India, where the cry for the protection of the Indian industries was already heard in high tones, it would be possible to maintain the present condition of affairs and insist on a countervailing duty imposed on English goods. The thing was absolutely inconceivable. The only justification had been a belief in free trade. He had endeavoured to elicit from the representatives of the new policy some declaration of their view respecting India. He had challenged them to state what their views were, but his challenge had remained unanswered. They had this really absurd proposition, that a great Empire policy was to be put before the country which neglected the interests, which did not take into consideration at all the views of three-fourths of the population of that Empire.

Assume for a moment that he was correct in the view that you risk the establishment of protective duties in colonies which are now free trade,not only against foreign countries, but also against the mother country, what was the arithmetical result ? What did that mean in figures. Our total exports to the Colonies now amounted to £131,000,000, and of that amount £90,000,000 went to free - trade colonies, and only £41,000,000 to protective colonies. Therefore they risked the imposition of new duties—duties which did not exist now—on £90,000,000 of our exports, and what did we get in exchange ? A possible reduction on £41,000,000. But we now knew that in Canada and Australia no reduction of the tariff against England was in contemplation. On the contrary, they proposed a totally different thing—not to reduce our duties, but to increase the tariff wall against foreign countries. As a matter of exchange, he considered it a deplorable transaction. Viewed from the point of view of an empire builder, it appeared to him that they were proceeding not towards the goal, but in a precisely opposite direction. If they admitted that free trade would be eventually the basis of the federation of the Empire, they were going, not towards Imperial free trade and not towards a Zollverein, but exactly the contrary way. In addition to that, they would set the whole world against our colonial Empire, with which they intended to forbid foreign countries to trade. He would add that in his judgment they would imperil the loyalty of colonial manufacturers, who would come more and more to regard this as a scheme which led them into direct antagonism and rivalry with English manufacturers.

The House had the other night from the Secretary to the Board of Trade one of those delightful speeches which they all listened to with pleasure and admiration, in which he clothed with new life and colour the most time-worn and exploded fallacies. He took the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife to task for stating that excess of imports over exports was a proof of commercial prosperity, and he instanced America to show that a large excess of exports over imports was a sign of great commercial vigour. But the hon. Gentleman appeared entirely to forget that America was a heavy debtor to England and Europe. He omitted to say that that indebtedness of America was estimated by the best authorities at something like £1,000,000,000 sterling, and that the interest on that vast sum amounted to no less than £45,000,000 or £50,000,000 a year, which interest was equal to half the excess of exports over imports in that country. He also omitted to mention that the imports into America were notoriously under-declared and under-valued in order to avoid the high *ad valorem* duties. That was one of the incidental advantages of a high tariff, that it entirely falsified statistics. He omitted to mention the important factor of the very large remittances made by America to residents and tourists in Europe, far exceeding in amount the sum sent in the contrary direction. If the hon. Gentleman would add together these three totals, he thought he would find that they went far to explain the difficulty. He was all the more glad to suggest this explanation because the explanation the hon. Gentleman offered—viz., that there had been a large transfer of capital from here to America, was absolutely topsy turvy. If that transfer had occurred it would have increased American imports and would have diminished the excess of exports, so that his explanation, in place of solving the difficulty, would have been a considerable factor in the other direction. The hon. Gentleman went on to say that this excess of exports was the cause of cheap money in America; and he suggested the converse proposition—viz., that the large excess of imports in this country was the cause of the dear money which had prevailed here for the last three years. A similar argument was attempted in the City by his right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham, and it was not altogether well received; the reply given by the audience was that the cause of dear money had been the war. He would also suggest that it had been our local and Imperial extravagance. Quite apart from that, let him say that excessive imports could hardly be the cause of dear money when they saw that during the last twenty years England had imported nearly £3,000,000,000 more than she exported; and yet, up to the time of the war, London enjoyed cheaper money than any other foreign capital. And if he might add another illustration from his own experience, he would draw the attention of the House to two countries—India and Egypt—both, like the United States, heavily indebted, and both exporting every year a large quantity of merchandise in excess of their imports—and yet countries where the rate of interest was steadily higher than in those European countries in which the imports exceeded the exports. He would not only say this, but would point to the fact that the dearest money occurred year after year and season after season at the period of the largest exports. He trusted that after this they would not be told that an excess of exports and cheap money were cause and effect. That could only be said by those who were still involved in the old fallacy of the mercantile theory—"Import largely and you lose your gold, export largely and you will become rich." These theories had been thoroughly exploded for now nearly 200 years.

Sir Edgar Vincent.

Might he be permitted to say a few words, before concluding, respecting the Free Food League. They had been subjected to a considerable amount of criticism. He did not complain of that; but he would ask their critics to consider what course was open to Unionists, who not only thought that protection would be disadvantageous to the country, and considered it, at the same time, disastrous.

Party politics? Could they allow their friends to blunder without either protest or warning? He could not hold such a debased view of national duty or Party loyalty. In 1902, when the corn tax was introduced, he opposed it to the best of his ability. He believed that it was a disintegrating measure; that it would necessarily lead to the division which was so soon to come. He believed that that tax was paltry as a financial expedient, and that it was vicious as a principle. What had been the result? Since that date they had had twenty-six by-elections and the Unionist party had fluctuated between failure and disaster. In twenty-five, fate had gone against them; fortune had only favoured them in one, and on that occasion the Unionist candidate opposed the taxation of the food of th people. He ventured to put forward these figures and to draw the attention of his friends on that side of the House to them, not by way of denunciation, but by way of a guide to future conduct. It did seem to him that the writing on the wall was absolutely clear, and that the late Lord Salisbury and the Prime Minister were right in holding that the British people had an ingrained dislike to the taxation of food. If that happened to be the case; if the Prime Minister happened to be right; were they prepared to go into the desert for twenty years while that ingrained feeling was being overcome? But, he based his observations on other grounds than the loss of this or that election. He held that the association of the Conservative and Unionist Party, identified with a cause which, rightly or wrongly, was opposed to that held by a large section of opinion in this country—the interests of the few at the expenses of the many. He saw in that the elements of social trouble and discord, which elements might, for more than any mere electoral results, cause infinite injury. It might be a coincidence, but it should be remembered that in every foreign country where protection prevailed there was Socialism in its various forms. In America the protectionists were identified with the capitalists, the monopolists, and the trusts. Were they on these Benches to be pilloried as the supporters of the capitalists, the monopolists, and the trusts? It would be a profound mistake for the wealthier classes of this country not to realise that the great security of their prosperity and security lay in the general content of the working classes. It would be a poor exchange if, in order to increase their profits, they ran the risk of the destruction of that confidence between class and class that had been characteristic of England since the abolition of the Corn Laws. For his own part he should do his utmost to prevent that Party to which he had the honour to belong from committing what he considered to be a grave error of judgment. And if the efforts of those who thought with him were unavailing, then it appeared to him that the only course consistent with political sincerity was to do their utmost to save the country from the policy from which they had been unable to restrain their Party. He held that protection was altogether unsuited to the commercial needs of England, and he was convinced that in its ultimate results it would imperil the safety, the loyalty, and the cohesion of the Empire.

*MR. DUKE (Plymouth) said that the hon. Member for Exeter had, in the course of his speech, discussed the conduct of the Government at the present time and their attitude towards the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in regard to their effect on the well-being of the Conservative Party. Unfortunately, his hon. friend in the course he had taken was at a disadvantage, in that he spoke on behalf of a minority of his Party, whose conduct with regard to the fiscal policy of the Government had been, in most instances, condemned—indisputably condemned—by their constituencies. ["No."] Were those Members of the Unionist Party who agreed with the hon. Member for Exeter supported by their constituencies. Why, throughout the debate they had been conspicuously sympathetic with themselves and condoled with by their political opponents because they insisted that they had been almost overborne by what they regarded as the tyrannical action of the local Conservative organisations, which they resisted and resented. Did any hon. Members suppose that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham controlled the Conservative organisations in this country. The right hon. Gentleman would only control those organisations so far as he commanded the adhesion, the sympathy, and the confidence of the Conservative Party. For his own part he had come into contact with the rank and file of the Conservative Party in various parts of the country, and he found they were breast-high for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham; and they had no doubt in the capacity of Ministers to give effect to and carry through the intentions of the right hon. Gentleman. He agreed the Amendment was really a question of confidence in His Majesty's Government. His hon. friend drew an interesting analogy between the present position and the case of a sailing ship, in which some of the crew had experience of serving under Captain Kidd, and were hesitating whether it was advisable in the general interests that there should be a mutiny. In that case, no doubt, the captain might have to walk the plank, but the Conservative Party in this House were not serving in such a humble craft. They were serving on a King's ship, and the course of that ship would not be dictated by the lower deck. The crew was not in a state of mutiny, or anything approaching it. It had confidence in its captain, and if the voyage, like that of the old man-of-war, was "all the way and back," the crew would stand by its captain. He did not like to have to deal with this question on the ground of the relations of Members of the Conservative Party to their Leader. He had had a presentiment for some time that they might bye-and-bye lose some of his hon. friends. That would be a matter of great personal regret to him, but there was in this question a far higher and deeper interest than the fortunes of any Party. It was the question of the necessities of the nation, and behind that lay the future of the Empire.

He had not been able to make up his mind, during the course of the debate, whether hon. Gentlemen opposite were really persuaded that there was in the present condition of industry and commerce in this country a cause for anxiety, a cause of danger, and a cause of mischief, or whether their view was that the apprehensions of the leaders of the Conservative Party were unfounded and imaginary. He had read words which fell from the Duke of Devonshire in which he said that the excessive tariffs of other nations had inflicted, and still inflict, a great injury upon some of the principal industries of this country. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose Burghs, in moving his Amendment, said he saw cause for anxiety in many things which had happened in the course of the last few years. Hon. Gentlemen opposite were aware, as they on that side were aware, of phenonema with reference to industries in this country which could not be misunderstood. Hardly a week passed but they saw reports of furnaces being shut down and mills closed in the steel industry, not because of any decline in the consumption of the goods they produced, not because of any inadequate or useless appliances, not because of want of enterprise by the manufacturer, not because of any trade disputes on the part of the workmen, but because foreign manufacturers combined behind tariff walls, and by trusts and cartels were able to deposit in this country, at a price with which it was impossible for the home manufacturer to compete, such quantities of their manufacture as to make it impossible for the home manufacturer to continue his undertaking.

Mr. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden) said that there would be an equivalent reduction in the foreign countries.

*Mr. DUKE said that whatever the result might be in protectionist countries, the result in this country was disastrous to the manufacturer and detrimental to the workman. That was a result which they saw repeated with monotonous reiteration during many weeks of the present winter. They had heard over and over again of this firm and of that finding it necessary to establish their works on the other side of a tariff wall. He did not know whether hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite had made up their minds that the state of affairs required the attention of statesmen. The declarations of the President of the Board of Trade had been misunderstood by many hon. Members on his own side of the House, and, he believed, by many hon. Members opposite also. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to have given the impression that the policy of the Government was to consider whether, at some future and remote date it would be desirable to ask this House if some homeopathic process of remedy might be applied in some glaring instance of wrong. He thought he was justified in saying that that was misstating the policy of the Government. If it were possible that His Majesty's Government could have renounced the view stated by the Prime Minister that this was a serious question, that evil and mischief were now occurring which ought to be dealt with, then perhaps it might have not mattered much so far as trade and commerce were concerned whether this Amendment were carried or not. He did not believe it of the Government. The attitude of hon. Members on Monday night rather reminded him of the story of the benevolent traveller and the mongoose. He met an unhappy man who was afflicted with the idea that he saw snakes. He offered to produce a mongoose which would get rid of them; the sufferer replied they were not real snakes, whereupon the

Samaritan explained, "The advantage is that mine is not a real mongoose." [AN HON. MEMBER asked who were the snakes?] The hon. Member must work that out for himself. It did seem to him on Monday night that hon. Gentlemen opposite offered to enter into a kind of make-believe that there was a real danger provided the Ministry would join them in make-belief, and limit themselves to a make belief remedy. He did not, however, think that the country was ready to disregard the phenomena of the industrial situation to which he had referred. That was a question of fact. Every hon. Member who had spoken had felt bound, in view of the knowledge possessed by the country at large on this subject, to admit that there was danger and mischief; and if that were so, was it not the business of the Government to provide a remedy? His only complaint with regard to the policy of retaliation which had been definitely adopted by Ministers was that they did not say to what, and when, and how it would be applied. He regretted that the Government did not see their way now to define the measures they proposed, and the area in the field of mischief to which they would be applied, and he hoped that one result of the debate would be that Ministers would crystallise into some form which would make action possible—the conclusions at which they had arrived as to the particular acts of foreign countries against which this country had cause of complaint, and in regard to which this country was entitled to take action, and the methods by which, in their view, it was desirable that action should be taken. He did not think that the Ministry would find the people of this country, either manufacturers or workmen, uncharitable critics of their conclusions or proposals.

He would pass from the question of fact. No one could have listened to the speeches of the debate without seeing how impossible it was for hon. Members to convert one another. The doctrines of Cobden were accepted almost as if they had been inspired; but he took to himself the consolation that this was a practical question. It was believed in the country to be a simple question, and he thought that the attitude of the people in this country with regard to the authorities which were being arrayed against them was an attitude of revolt. Let them see in the light of the two recent instances how the matter stood, and how the interests of the country were served when we came to govern our conduct in serious affairs by texts and maxims laid down in past times, by competent persons no doubt, but which were texts of human origin. There were two conspicuous instances—there was the instance of the conflict that arose between Canada and Germany with regard to the preference given by the former to this country. That was not settled by reference to economic texts. It was settled in defiance of political economy by the unanimous voice of the people of this country. It was settled in such a way as to prove our determination to resist any external attempt to sever the unity of the Empire by the use of those undue tariffs, undue measures of commercial legislation, which it was proposed by Germany to employ against Canada. Another illustration, which could not be regarded with the same amount of satisfaction, was the corn duty. We happened lately to have a corn duty which did not hurt a living soul in the country, and one day the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that it was to be taken off. The first criticism that reached him was, "You had much better have kept it and established old-age pensions"—and that was a criticism that did not come from anyone on the Conservative side of the House. Every one knew that that tax did not, in fact, raise the price of bread by one farthing, and in regard to that tax a proposal came from Canada which said: "You have got this tax; it does not hurt you, and, therefore, out of that £2,500,000 which you are getting give us something in exchange for advantages we will give you in order to show that you are walking in the same paths with us towards Imperial progress and Imperial unity." That might have been done but for the fact that one Minister in the Government had such exaggerated devotion for certain maxims about taxation that he was prepared to resign his position rather than to consent to this course in the interests of Canada. When men came to consider the effect of what was called the free-trade doctrine, in the first instance, as it affected this country, and in the second as it affected Canada and the rest of the Colonies, he had not very much doubt as to the judgment at which they would arrive and the course which they would pursue. We were not going to be satisfied much longer with a solution of these questions which depended upon the servitude to the letter of a dead and inapplicable text. There had been no such devotion to the dead letter since the time of the Scribes and Pharisees, and he looked for the end of that tyranny.

What was the position in which we now stood with regard to the Colonies? For nearly a life-time the constant cry of the Colonies to this country had been "try preferential trade." That cry, which had been heard over and over again, began in Canada, where they had the American system in full operation under their eye, but it extended to all the Colonies. It was repeated by Ministers of those Colonies at successive conferences, and, down to the year 1896, it met from Ministers of both Parties in the State a flat and uncompromising negative. Then in 1897 Canada, with a courage and devotion not often recognised, on her own initiative gave us a rebate of her duties of 25 per cent., which she subsequently increased to 33 per cent. It had often been said that that was worth nothing to us. But it cost Canada something. The loss to Canada by that patriotic act was £2,000,000 or £3,000,000, which was not a small sum to a young country. The result of that was immediate action on the part of Germany. Germany saw the danger, from the German point of view, of that act and dealt with the matter severely. Now, hon. Members who had read the correspondence knew that it was the present Government who denounced the treaty which gave Germany a right to complain of the action of Canada in this matter. In 1902 this Government, perfectly aware of the desires the Colonies had so long cherished in this regard—desires which had been so long repelled—invited the colonial representatives in London to discuss the case of Imperial preference—a discussion opened by a speech of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, in which he explained that it was the desire of the Government to take account of this question of Imperial preference and to know what was its practical shape in the minds of the Colonies. It was a relief to him on the previous evening to learn from the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary that the Government had not departed from that position. The matter immediately before the House was to consider whether this Government, which took a real view of real dangers, and which desired to meet them with real remedies, should have an opportunity of formulating its policy, at the same time placing no impediment in the way of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and those who believed in his policy, to prevent their placing his proposals before the country. Then they might be able to say to our brethren in the Colonies that we would walk with them reasonably and cautiously in the path in which we were invited to walk—the path which had proved for them a path of prosperity. The alternative was that they should be left each to take their separate individual course. He would deplore that possibility more than the defeat of the Government or any member of it. He believed that the path which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had marked out with regard to the future was the right path; the goal was the right goal, and it was consistent with the Imperial past of this country. He trusted that it would produce an Imperial, prosperous and beneficial future. At any rate, so far as he was concerned, upon the question of the moderate and cautious proposals of the Prime Minister, which in no way contradicted the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, he trusted that the Government would listen to the advice of their hearty supporters, the great body of their supporters, who had confidence in their judgment and loyalty, and that they would not be afraid of the possibility that a few young gentlemen on that side of the House might perhaps join the legitimate Opposition.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire) said that the hon. Member for Plymouth, who had spoken last, had favoured the House with a nautical simile, and had said that whatever action some of his Party might take he would be loyal to his

Mr. Duke.

captain. Which captain did the hon. Member mean? The one who had left or the one who now governed the ship? The hon. Member had told the House that he had been sunk in the depths of despair by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, because he thought the policy of the Government was free trade; but that then he had heard the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary and was buoyed up to the pitch of enthusiasm. He (Mr. Crombie) thought the policy of the Government must be like the mongoose in the story which the hon. Member had told them. It was not real. He had heard the speeches of four Ministers, which were somewhat contradictory. The President of the Board of Trade had said that the policy of the Government was entombed in the breast of the Prime Minister, and so far as the right hon. Gentleman was concerned that might have been the case, but the other Ministers who had spoken seemed to be quite aware of what the policy was. The revelations which had been made by the President of the Board of Trade had shown the House that the Government itself, like the beast in Revelations, was a winged beast, and it was only natural that from such a Ministry they should have an extremely hybrid policy. That policy was to put on protective duties in order to extend the area of free trade. That was the retaliation policy of the Government. If he might indulge in metaphor he would compare the policy of the Government to an imperial pint measure filled with the most potent protection liquor with a free trade label on the outside.

Speaking as a practical manufacturer, the question he would like to ask was how would the policy of protective retaliation or retaliatory protection, which ever they might call it, affect the woollen industry in which he was engaged? They had been told that the woollen industry was threatened; it was threatened by a return to protection. He was not old enough to remember the days of protection, but the firm of which he was a member, during the first forty years of the last century enjoyed the blessing of protection. Those years ought to have been prosperous years, but curiously enough they were years of stress and struggle and adversity, while the intervening sixty years of free trade, between now and then, had been years of peace and prosperity for the business. He admitted that during the last twenty years the woollen imports had grown considerably, but they were imports of goods which foreigners could make cheaper and better than we ourselves. In this country every woollen manufacturer had a speciality of his own on which he made his money, and it did not pay him to manufacture the speciality of his neighbour, and that system enabled the foreigners to take what we made exceptionally well in exchange for the goods they sent here. Although there is a tariff put on everything they used we were able to sell our goods in France, Germany, and America, because we purchased everything we made in the cheapest markets of the world. Free imports were the secret of the strength of the British manufacturer. It was the free imports that made our exports the greatest exports in the world, and now came the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham with a proposal which, if accepted, would destroy the strength of the woollen industry by cutting off the secret of that strength as the hair of Samson was cut off by Delilah. Were they going to put a tax on wool, that was the product of Australia? Supposing the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham discovered that Australia wanted a preference, was it suggested that that preference should be given on wool? Fifteen years ago the woollen trade used to use logwood for dyeing, and they were beaten by foreign dyes, but the result had been that they had imported the foreign dye and could now dye as well as foreigners. His own trade as a woollen manufacturer would be absolutely ruined if it were handicapped by duties put upon dyes, machinery, and carding materials. He looked upon the McKinley Tariff with absolute detestation, because it shut him off from valuable customers, but, while he recognised that fact, he also recognised that it shut out most formidable competitors. The American patent loom, so largely used to-day, was now made in Yorkshire by English workmen and English capital, because the inventor was unable to export it cheaply enough to this country, and had, therefore, to dispose of the patent here. High tariffs threw us into the arms of the Colonies. Thus McKinley and Prince Bismarck had been "missionaries of Empire" and had done more for our trade with the Colonies than the Member for West Birmingham. He did not ask hon. Members opposite to "think Imperially," but to think clearly. If they wanted protection, it was feasible; retaliation was feasible, preferential duties were feasible; but to clamour for all these at the same time was to ask for things contradictory to one another. For his part he was contented with free trade.

MR. LAMBTON (Durham, S.E.) said that it was the duty of the Opposition to oppose, and naturally hon. Gentlemen opposite revelled in a vote of censure. He looked upon this Amendment as a test to the Conservative Party of the principles which differentiated free trade from protection. Parties were always with them, but principles—well, it remained to be seen. He had looked forward to the opportunity of hearing the Prime Minister clearing up the doubts which had exercised the minds of many of his supporters during the past six months, for the right hon. Gentleman was the head of the Unionist Party, and its members loyally responded to his efforts in its behalf. He thought that the Prime Minister of a Government might be likened to the trainer of a racing establishment who was responsible for the training and running of his horses. If the "public form" of those horses was outrageously inconsistent the trainer might be called upon for an explanation. This demand was not necessarily any reflection on the ability or honesty of the trainer, because the faults in the horse might be due to outside influence, or to the animal itself, in which case it was usually drafted from the stable. There was another rule on the Turf. The trainer was fined for every horse that ran in the wrong colours. He could not remain satisfied with the "public form" of the representatives of the Government, for they were not running in the colours which were now printed on the official card. This state of confusion had been going on for some time. He had never complained that they had no "settled convictions," and he thought that it was courageous on the part of the Prime Minister to stand up and say that he had no "settled convictions." But he did remonstrate with the Government that, inasmuch as they had no settled convictions of their own, they ought to have observed an attitude of neutrality to those of their followers who had. Had this been the attitude of the Government? The House wanted a discussion on this subject last year, but the opportunity was refused. The opponents of the fiscal policy were told to bring forward a vote of censure, and this they had now done. In the meantime, however, the Government had given an unfair advantage to one section of their Party. By postponing this discussion in Parliament for nine months the ex-Colonial Secretary had made good use of his opportunity, and the other section of the Party and the Opposition were now attempting to catch the right hon. Gentleman up. Why? He thought that it had been owing to the by-elections, for the cause of which through the death of hon. Members there could be no feeling except one of profound regret. But nearly the whole of the newspaper Press was on the side of the fiscal reform advocates, and if there had been no by-elections to test the feeling of the country, it would have been believed abroad that the ex-Colonial Secretary was sweeping the country. He was convinced that the opinion would have gone forth to the world that Great Britain was a protectionist country and that all the Colonies had adopted the policy of the right hon. Gentleman. That would have caused more dislocation of trade than had already taken place. He wished the Government to consider their position. The Government knew well that a large section of their Party was opposed to the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman. Personally he had been treated with scant courtesy by the Liberal Unionist Party in his constituency. No word of sympathy or of help had come from the Government; all the sympathy and assistance had come from the other side. He now asked the Government to consider the forces they had to contend with, because they were very great. It was said that all the business men were against the free-traders, and he had read in the newspapers that an hon. Member was reported to have said, referring to the right hon. Member for East Fife, that he was only a lawyer and could not have a sound opinion on this subject, that the country had been too long governed by lawyers and the aristocracy.

MR. RENWICK (Newcastle-on-Tyne): Hear, hear!

MR. LAMBTON, continuing, said the same hon. Member told them that the sons of Dukes were going about opposing the ex-Colonial Secretary because they knew that the doom of the lawyers and the aristocracy was sealed. A few weeks later the hon. Member for Newcastle took a prominent part in the election at Gateshead; and in its results he congratulated the hon. Member on the doom of the aristocrats there. They had also been called Cobdenites, and he wished to inform these hon. Members that he was not a Cobdenite, but a free-trader. Free trade was no more invented by Mr. Cobden than protection was invented by the ex-Colonial Secretary. The predictions of Mr. Cobden had no more to do with him than the predictions of Mother Shipton. It was also said that Mr. Cobden made many mistakes; but the modern missionary of protection had made more mistakes in six months than Mr. Cobden did in the whole of his career. The Secretary to the Board of Trade had taken up the "all fools" argument of the ex-Colonial Secretary to the effect that nearly every country was protectionist except ourselves; therefore it was asked, "are they all fools?" The same argument was used in this House the other night. How far did the hon. Gentleman mean to carry his opinion, for it could not only be applied to the fiscal question? There were other subjects in which we might copy foreign nations. If the Secretary to the Board of Trade envied these countries their protection, did he also envy them their conscription, their morals, or their religion? The members of the Christian Church were in a minority in the world, but did the hon. Member contemplate a pilgrimage to Mecca with a hankering after the harem of the Turk? That was an argument that might be carried too far. He was not one of those who wished "to think continentally." That was the saying of an American statesman quoted by the ex-Colonial Secretary. He preferred the saying of a famous Englishman, not an imported saying. John Milton, the great poet and statesman, said—

> "Let England never forget her precedence in teaching nations how to live."

The free-trade Unionists had had to contend not only against poetry and songs, but against the literature of the Tariff Reform League, and in that the league was supreme and unapproachable. Then the letters of Sir Henry Howorth must have an effect on any cause which he espoused —an effect which was quite incalculable. Those letters would be invaluable to the historian of the future who wished to depict the manners and customs of the tariff reformers. Among other letter-writers, the hon. Member for Central Bradford had taken under his protection the Prime Minister and the trade of Bradford, while the hon. Member for Tunbridge Wells had performed the same kindly office for the late Colonial Secretary and the county of Kent. From the latter hon. Member a letter generally appeared at the necessary moment, and it received an answer from the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. The hon. Member asked in one letter if protection would be extended to hops, and he received an answer that hops would be considered. Did the hon Member for Central Bradford agree with that dictum of his leader?

MR. WANKLYN (Bradford, Central): Perhaps I shall have an opportunity of replying later.

MR. LAMBTON suggested to the hon. Member that it would be conducing to the prosperity of the country to have high-priced hops in Kent and high-priced beer in Bradford. But Kent did not live by hops alone. It was one of the largest sheep-producing counties in England. The hon. Member for Tunbridge Wells had been thinking of hops; but suppose his brain should turn to wool. Would the hon. Member for Bradford support a tax on wool for the benefit of Kent? In one of Mr. Joseph Brailsford's letters there was the statement that foreign countries were wiser than we, because when they had a boom they kept it to themselves. But how long had the interests of the producer been such a matter of great consideration? A few years ago there was a boom in coal which was not received with much favour by hon. Gentlemen, and in which the coal producer did not meet with much sympathy. It was even suggested that as the miners had benefited by the war it was fair to tax them. The ex-Colonial Secretary made a speech and referred to this point. He went down to Birmingham and there he stated that the duty on coal was paid either by the coalowners or the foreigners who bought the coal. That was the opinion of the ex-Colonial Secretary. The President of the Board of Trade suggested that the miners of this country had benefited by the war, and said that as they had benefited it was only fair to tax them. Was the same principle to be followed in respect of any particular trade that benefited by retaliation? That was one of the questions which would have to be considered by the Tariff Commission.

He had told his constituents that he should oppose any advance in the direction of the late Colonial Secretary's policy. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, he admitted, was actuated by high motives and he had dreamt of a mighty Empire. Other people had dreamt of great Empires, and some countries had waded through oceans of blood to gain them, but the ex-Colonial Secretary proposed to gain this mighty Empire by restrictions on trade. He did not think that was a wise plan. The right hon. Gentleman had underrated the loyalty of the Colonies, which had never been greater than in recent years. If Queen Victoria's name had been received throughout the English-speaking world with such enthusiasm, why was it? Because she was the freedom-loving Sovereign of a free people, and not because of anything she could give. When his constituents asked him whether he was in favour of the Prime Minister's policy, he replied that his intellect was not acute enough to follow that policy. But he gave a definition of his own policy which was practically that of the President of the Board of Trade without the protectionist part. He said to his constituents that he would go so far, but not an inch further; that he would oppose those members of the Government who supported the policy of the ex-Colonial Secretary, and that he would ask the Prime Minister to choose between such Ministers and himself. The House had heard a remarkable series of speeches from this free-trade Government. A great deal had been written on the slate, but each Minister rubbed off what the one before him had written. Adapting some well-known lines, he might say of the Government—

> "You may break, you may shatter, the slate if you will
> But the scent of protection will hang round it still."

He loyally supported the policy of the Prime Minister as announced by him, but he objected to that policy being made a stepping-stone to a further policy. He intended to vote for the Amendment. He did not know how he stood in the books of the Whips; but he maintained that he was acting with perfect loyalty to the Government, to his principles, and to his Party in taking that course. He had been one of the first on that side to warn the Government against tampering with free-trade principles. Three years ago, when they introduced this change in the fiscal system of the country by their export duty on coal, he begged them not to taste blood, and he told them what the inevitable end would be if they did. If that end was now in sight it was not his fault, and he was not responsible, and he was perfectly convinced that, if he supported the Government on this occasion, he would not be doing his duty either to his constituents or to his own conscience.

*Mr. RENWICK said he had read in a newspaper that in this debate no star was to speak to-day. When he read that he said "Thank heaven, we have had enough of stars in the debate." He sincerely hoped that they were going now to have speeches of a practical character. He thought that had been the case so far with the debate to-day. The hon. Member for South-East Durham had referred to speeches which he himself had made in Newcastle and Gateshead. In answer to what the hon. Member said, he would say first that he took a considerable and an active part in the Gateshead election, and he thought there was nothing to be ashamed of in connection with the result. The Unionist candidate polled 1,304 votes more than ever a Unionist polled in the constituency before. In the face of figures like these, who could say that the fiscal proposals were losing to the Party any of their followers? But there was something else in connection with the Gateshead election which would be heard of in this House hereafter, and that was that the election was not fought on the fiscal proposals, but on the question of Home Rule. It was claimed by the Leader of the Home Rule Party as a direct victory for Home Rule. In a speech made after the election, he himself said, and he repeated the statement now, that the Member for Gateshead had sold himself body and soul to the Home Rule party. The hon. Member for South-East Durham had also said that, in referring to a speech of the hon. Member for East Fife he asked, "What do lawyers know on the subject?" adding that we had been too long ruled by lawyers. He wished to tell the House he was speaking then under a sense of what he felt to be a slight on the manufacturers of this country, when he found that sons of Dukes and other members of the aristocracy were going about the country telling manufacturers that they did not understand their business, and that they ought to employ better machinery and better methods. He was proud that he did say, "What on earth do they know of manufacturers, and the struggles of manufacturers?" What did they know of the ruin of factories, even in the Tyneside district? He recently accompanied the Mayor of a Tyneside borough to a new forge which was fitted up with the latest machinery at a cost, he thought, of £50,000. Not one piece of the machinery there had ever been turned on except for experimental purposes, and this was entirely owing to imports from Germany which came into our markets. That was a forge which if in operation, would give employment to between 300 and 400 men. Such forges were not only on the Tyne, but also on the Wear, and in the district. They were told by an hon. Member opposite of the prosperity of the chemical industry in which he was interested, but he did not tell them that his company were the possessors of a most valuable monopoly, and that other manufacturers could not use the same patent. The hon. Member also did not tell them that while his company was so prosperous and paying from 50 to 100 per cent., in recent years other chemical manufacturers had to close their factories. Nor yet did he remind the House when he talked of the chemical industry of the Tyneside that, by the new Russian and Austrian tariffs, duties of from 100 to 200 per cent. would be imposed on manufactures from Tyneside, which would entirely destroy the export to those countries. Facts like these made them indignant when they were told by lawyers and young aristocrats how they should conduct their business. He knew these hon. and right hon. Gentlemen had done good service to the State, but do not let them go down to the country to teach manufacturers their business.

He wanted to make his position perfectly clear in regard to the vote which he was going to give in that division. He was a supporter—a loyal supporter, he trusted—of His Majesty's Government, and therefore he should vote against the Amendment. But besides being a supporter of the Government in their policy of negotiation and retaliation he was in favour of the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and he considered there was nothing inconsistent with regard to their conduct in that matter, nor inconsistent in the attitude taken up by the Government. They quite acknowledged that the country was not yet ripe for the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham; but he did believe it was ripe for the policy of retaliation and negotiation. With regard to what had been said by the hon. Member for Derby, who would welcome foreign goods dumped into this country, he asked the hon. Member if he would equally welcome the foreign workman who made the goods, because he thought it would be better for the country as a whole if the goods were made in this country by foreign workmen rather than that they should be made abroad, since in that case the money earned would be spent in this country rather than in a foreign country. Was it not the fact that foreign imported goods fixed the prices of the home produce? Undoubtedly they did. Then was it not inconsistent and illogical on the part of the trades unionists that they should allow these goods made by men working longer hours for less wages to come into the country free of any duty whatever? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton stated that our free-trade policy had been ratified by the unparalleled prosperity of the country, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon said the result of it had been that we had wealth beyond the dreams of avarice. An hon. Member opposite had reminded them that they ought to read their *Hansard*. He had been taking that advice, and he found that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, on 13th May, 1902, said—

> "Thirty per. cent of the population has been shown to be in a state hovering on a verge of poverty if not actually plunged into it, and it is these people who will suffer."

He found also that on 22nd April, 1902, the hon. Member for Derby said—

> "Not only are there a large number of workmen employed at 18s. and 19s. per week, but here in London alone there are about 500,000 people always out of employment, and taking the whole country throughout we find by the returns that there are nearly 1,000,000 workmen always out of employment."

Did these people participate in the wealth beyond the dreams of avarice? Did they thank Heaven that we had had unparalleled prosperity because of free trade? Ask the 1,000,000 people out of employment what their opinion was. The hon. Member for Derby had asked what railway men had to gain by any alteration in our policy. As long as there were 1,000,000 people out of employment there would always be more people demanding work on railways than the railway companies could give, and so the rate of wages would be kept low. He was told that there was doubt as to the state of poverty in the country. He had taken the trouble to ascertain what the hon. and learned Member for South Shields said in regard to that matter. In the debate on the corn tax on 12th May, 1902, the hon. and learned Member called attention to a speech by the Member for West Monmouth on the number of paupers end people on the verge of destitution. He said—

> "We are able to give the proportion of that underfed class with extreme precision. When I last addressed the House on this subject on the night of the introduction of the Budget, I gave some figures from Mr. Rowntree's book with regard to the population of York. I pointed out that by a most admirable calculation Mr. Rowntree had given the family budgets of 1,465 families. He showed that these people were systematically underfed.."

He also pointed out that the dietary of these people was systematically and necessarily less than the workhouse scale of diet. Had they then reason to bless the so-called unparalleled prosperity and wealth beyond the dreams of avarice? He maintained that as long as they had 1,000,000 people out of employment and others always on the verge of starvation, there was ample justification on their part for having raised this most important question. He maintained that the fiscal proposals should be carefull considered when there was such a lamentable state of things always in our midst. It was a state of things which imposed very great responsibility on the labour leaders in this country. He sincerely trusted that they would state what they proposed as an alternative policy to that now before the country for dealing with this important matter. The junior Member for Oldham said he also knew that a large number of people were on the verge of starvation in his constituency. He was a popular, clever, and accomplished young man, and, although an aristocrat, he acknowledged he had a great future before him. Considering such a state of things, had he been endowed with the hon. Member's advantages, he would have taken the advice of the Colonial Secretary on the previous day not to close the door to colonial preference, because the object of that policy was to eventually make the Empire self-sustaining. He thought his conduct so far had been such that he had made it impossible for him to join any Government on the Unionist side for many years. He might accept a position on the other side, but when he was asked to support Home Rule he would find that the cheers would not come from the other side. The hon. Member speaking in this House on 12th May, 1902, said—

> "Every argument which could be used against the corn tax would be equally applicable to the tea tax. I have listened to the frequent quotations which have been made from Mr. Rowntree's book, which must have impressed everyone who has read it. In all these pitiable budgets of the poor, tea figures as universally as bread. Do not mix sentiment up with taxation. In taxation what is required is equity, and sentimental notions ought not to be allowed to prevent any Government from taking the correct financial course. The only chance the struggling millions of whom we read in Mr. Rowntree's book and whom we see in our own constituencies ever have of enjoying the bounties of nature and science lies not in any socialistic system of taxation, not in any charitable enterprise, or charitable immunity from taxation, but solely and simply in an effective and scientific commercial development."

He agreed with the hon. Member this was not a matter of sentiment. It was in the development of our commerce that he believed this country would find its strength in future. He did not believe it would be done merely by better education, as some hon. Members told them. He asked was it because of their better education, that they had protection in the protectionist countries? The first thing they had to find was work for those who required it. He reminded the free-traders that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had stated that he would take great care that whatever happened the food of the people should not become dearer. He believed this and if he thought the food of the poor would cost one penny more than at the present time he would not support his policy.

*MR. HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle) said he would not have ventured to take part in this important debate, seeing that he was a comparatively young Member of the House, but in so many of the speeches to which they had listened from the other side of the House, reference had been made to the interests of the workers of the country, that he had come to the conclusion that it was time that the workers spoke on their own behalf. The hon. Member who had just sat down had thrown out a good many challenges to the labour leaders. If the House would listen to those who directly represented the workers, he thought they would be able to prove that the workers were directly opposed to the policy the hon. Member just laid down. If, as he and others said, this policy was being propounded on behalf of the workers of the country, it seemed very strange that every means afforded the workers of demonstrating their opinions had shown that the workers were directly opposed to the attitude he and others had adopted. Reference had been made to recent by-elections. He would certainly like to allude to two of them. Hon. Members must be aware that shortly after the policy suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the ex-Colonial Secretary a by-election took place in a northern constituency called Barnard Castle. There were three candidates. Two candidates were against the policy advocated by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House and one in favour of protection. What was the result? Although there were two free-traders against one protectionist, the protectionist failed to be returned. That was an emphatic answer on behalf of the working people so far as that constituency was concerned. But another election had occurred to which reference had been made, he meant at Gateshead. The hon. Member for Newcastle had tried to convince the House that he was exceedingly anxious for the working men of this country, but he showed that anxiety in a most marvellous fashion, because he went down to that constituency and did all in his power to secure the defeat of the representative of the working men, and to secure the return of the representatives of a section of the community whose whole interest was against that of the working people. Perhaps the hon. Member was not aware that only two days ago an important conference had been held in Bradford which represented directly over 1,000,000 of the workers of this country. If he might be pardoned for saying so, that conference represented more directly the workmen of Great Britain than any other conference that had been held. It was generally known that they were in the various constituencies, entirely independent of the old orthodox political Parties, and therefore it could not be said, as in the past, that that conference represented the satellites of one political Party. At that conference a resolution was proposed on the lines of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman now before the House, and another motion was proposed on very much the same lines advocated on the Government benches. What was the result of the vote? 970,000 were in favour of practically the Amendment now before the House, and only 27,000 in favour of the position advocated on the other side of the House. He maintained that that was an indication of the mind of the workers of the country on this great and important question.

He had listened with some interest to the speech which had been delivered by the hon. Gentleman, who represented the constituency in which he had resided for many years, and in reply to the hon. Gentleman he would trouble the House with a few statistics. The doctrines now preached by the junior Member for Newcastle had been served out for twenty years by his predecessor, Sir Charles F. Hammond, and during the whole time covered by Sir Frederick Hammond's speeches, which period had been referred to by the hon. Gentleman who spoke last, between 1871 and 1901, the population of the counties of Northumberland and Durham increased by 67 per cent., and the number of males increased in that time by 194,902—in fact, almost double. The increase in the number of men employed in the Tyne shipyards was from 2,423 in 1880 to 6,657 in 1900. He held that that was a fair index of the number of men employed in the North-eastern shipbuilding yards. The number of men employed in the shipyards had increased from 5,423 to 14,777, and the total tonnage built on the Tyne had increased from 361,326 tons in 1880 to 865,274 tons in 1900. The wages in the trade, with which he had been officially connected for the last twenty years, had risen from 30s. to 37s. During the debate many statements had been made as to the ruin of certain industries in this country. He wished to give an illustration from his experience. He had spent sixteen years of his life in the foundry of a firm of locomotive engineers and was cognisant with the various departments in these works. Many hon. Gentlemen in the House knew that these works held the highest position in the world in turning out locomotives. They were in a position to refuse orders for years, resting on the reputation that they had built up; but there came a time when they could not get orders. Other firms in Glasgow and elsewhere with modern appliances undertook to complete a locomotive engine in a week all the year round, while the firm to which he had referred could not do so. As a matter of fact the Stephenson Locomotive Engineering Works had recently been transferred from the Tyne to Darlington, the town in which he himself lived, and had been organised with up-to-date machinery. Not only were many establishments carried on with obsolete machinery, but their management was altogether inefficient. Formerly the employer stood in close relation to his workman, but now-a-days the limited liability director came upon the scene, and managers of works were appointed who had no practical experience of the business. The result was that the efficiency of the work and the output fell off, but surely free trade was in no way blamable. Then a great deal had been said about higher wages for the workers—well, he had been engaged for the last twelve or fifteen years in arranging the rate of wages in a particular trade by means of a conciliation board. His experience was that an advance of wages was not always got when trade was good. Would the hon. Gentleman, who said that he was so much interested in the poor working men, back up his views by voting for the Resolution which his hon. friend Mr. Paulton had introduced in behalf of the trades unions in this country? His experience was that good trade had not always brought increased wages, unless organisation had been good also. It was not more restriction on trade he desired, but less restriction. If hon. Gentlemen opposite would turn their attention to royalties, and railway rates, they would approach real remedies and would help the manufacturers without penalising the mass of workers in this country. He and those who agreed with him had no Whip to obey, but were ready to act with either side on a question of improving the condition of workers of this country, but they felt on this occasion that they must go into the Lobby and vote emphatically in favour of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose.

MR. BECKETT (Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby) said he wished to congratulate the hon. Gentleman on the speech which he had made. The subject under debate had been discussed at portentous length, and he did not wish to trespass unduly on the attention of the House, but, speaking from the point of view of the bankers, he thought that it was rather remarkable that, wide as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had spread his net, he had not been able to capture a single banker to serve on that committee of political blacksmiths who were engaged in forging fetters for British industry—[MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh; oh!"]—and who, if they had paid any attention to the speech of the President of the Board of Trade, must now be pursuing their labours with somewhat heavy hearts. Bankers had a peculiar right to speak on this question, because they were not interested professionally in one particular trade. They were interested in all trades, because their fortune rose and fell with the fortunes of the commercial community as a whole. He wished to speak, not on behalf of the bankers of London, who represented the greatest money market of the world, but on behalf of the country bankers, whose fortunes entirely depended upon the industries which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham declared were about to be ruined.

They had had a long recital about ruined industries, and in listening to the hon. Member for Newcastle he had been struck with the significant omission which that hon. Gentleman had made of the shipping industry. The hon. Member was connected, he believed, with the shipping industry, and that was one of the biggest, if not the very biggest, industry in the country. But they had not heard from the hon. Member for Newcastle one single word about it. Why was that? It was because the hon. Member knew full well that the shipping industry was in a prosperous condition. This omission of the very industry with which the hon. Member was connected was an exemplification of the mode of argument adopted by protectionists all over the country. The industries which were not in a flourishing condition were the industries, of course, which cried out that they were being ruined. Now, those who argued that our industries were being ruined had to prove, first that the proportion of ruined industries as compared with the flourishing industries was something more than infinitesimal; then that the ruin of industries was foreign competition, not home competition and effete methods and business inefficiency, and finally that the disappearance of such ruined industries was not soon followed by the emergence of others better equipped, with larger profits, and affording greater employment. When protectionists had proved these three things, their arguments would have some value, but not till then. It was not the ruined industries that caused alarm to the right hon. Member for Sleaford: it was the great increase, as he said, of the wealth of Germany and the United States. He should have thought that it was rather late in the day to trot out that argument in the House of Commons. The Prime Minister himself had disposed of it effectually once for all, by showing that it was to our advantage to deal with the people who were well off, even if they were protected countries. Every one knew perfectly well that even in protected countries there were periods of depression. Trade must contract and expand; it was the law of nature. In this country there were some signs of contraction, but there were no signs of decay. There was no necessity to throw ourselves into a state of alarm and rush to the adoption of quack remedies for that contraction. The causes of that contraction were perfectly well-known. He would specially mention the late war. They could not throw away £250,000,000 without feeling the effects of it after. America had not thrown away £250,000,000, and yet she was suffering from a great depression in trade, and he was told that there was a greater amount of unemployment in that country than in this. Last year, when American exports reached the highest figure ever known, and when Germany exported more than in its previous history, there was the greatest depression in employment. The reason was that when the home market was unable to take up the goods produced, the manufacturer had to rush and sell his goods abroad. The test of a nation's prosperity by the amount of its exports was utterly fallacious.

It was a business maxim that if you took care of the consumers the producers would take care of themselves. When the consumer was prosperous the whole community was prosperous; but the producer might be producing a great deal, and yet the community be impoverished. How they were to get prosperity out of that policy he was unable to understand. Then it was said that it would create more work for the workmen. It would make more work only in the sense in which an ultimely shower of rain on the farmer's hay made more work for the farmer. Besides, where was the fund out of which they were going to pay higher wages for labour? That point had not yet been explained by the right hon. Gentleman. Another argument advanced in favour of the policy was that we had not a fair share of the world's commerce. It seemed to him that we had infinitely more than our fair share as the figures stood at present. Our trade with all the world last year was £900,000,000 for a population of 40,000,000, while the foreign trade of Germany and America with a population of 133,000,000 was only £979,000,000. Therefore, our trade was three times as great per head as the trade of Germany and America. It could not be contended that an Englishman had three times as much talent, energy, or capital as the American or German; consequently that extra share of trade must be due to our free-trade system and nothing else. The arguments of the right hon. Gentleman with reference to dumping had been refuted again and again. The argument against dumping by foreign countries meant that the cheaper the goods we imported the more zealously should we strive to keep them out. People bought goods because they wanted to have them cheap, and their cheapness enabled the manufacturers to make profitable use of them, and upon it the prosperity of various industries had been built up, but if they placed a heavy duty on these cheap goods, many industries would be injured to the advantage only of a few. He would like to ask his protectionist friends whether or not they contended that a protective tariff kept out "dumped" goods. According to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham the Colonies were suffering from dumping; therefore protective tariffs did not prevent it.

The conclusion he had come to was that the keener the competition to which this country was exposed the more closely ought the people to adhere to free trade. The Government, however, did not take that view. They thought that they could mitigate the pressure of foreign competition by a policy of retaliation. He disliked the word retaliation, he disliked introducing the phraseology of war into a question of trade, and he disliked the thing still more. It was vague, uncertain, partial, arbitrary, and hazardous. No member of the Government had defined what retaliation meant. The President of the Board of Trade had stated that it would be sufficient to threaten, but he predicted that the tariff walls of foreign nations would not collapse at the blast of the ram's horn blown by the President of the Board of Trade. Threats would be no more successful in the sphere of commerce than they had been in the political sphere. The Colonial Secretary had reproached the free-traders for saying at one moment that retaliation meant much, and at another that it meant little. There was no contradiction between those statements. It might mean much or little. The Government tried to make the free-trade Unionists think that it meant little, but when appealing to the protectionists they made out that it meant a great deal. The House wanted to know where retaliation began and where it was to end. What trade was the Government going to select for their experiment? How were the words "outrageous unfairness" to be defined? Every Government had a right to protect its own industries as it pleased; therefore there was no "outrageous unfairness" on the part of Governments. Was it the result of cartels? But the promoters of the cartel system simply fined their own people for our advantage, so that the unfairness, if any, was to their people and not to us. A clearer definition and clearer thinking on this matter were desirable. Where was the scheme to be applied? It was true that the principal trade of Bradford was hard hit by the M'Kinley Tariff, but there were compensations. Up to that time Bradford had been a city of one trade—a disadvantageous circumstance to any town. Since that trade had diminished in prosperity other trades had grown up in its place, greatly to the advantage of Bradford, and one of them was of a most remarkable character, because the hon. Member for Central Bradford said it had been able to convert him from the raw material into the finished article. The Government said they wanted to extend the area of free trade, but they were going to proceed to do it in a strange manner. They appeared to be going to foreign countries to say, "If you do not become free-traders we will become protectionists." The action was akin to that of going to the Chinese and saying, "If you do not become Christians we will become Confucians." It was said that retaliation only meant commercial treaties. He should never forget hearing Mr. Gladstone, who knew more about these things than most people, saying that there were great disadvantages attaching to all commercial treaties, and he believed that that statesman abandoned a commercial treaty he was negotiating with France simply because it entailed a reversal of our free trade policy. The Government might expect to do great things by commercial treaties, but it should be remembered that the two greatest financiers and statesmen of the century, Peel and Gladstone, had the weapon of negotiation or retaliation in their hands, but they deliberately abandoned it because they believed it was of no advantage to this country, and where they failed he did not think the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was likely to succeed. The President of the Board of Trade had urged that the knowledge that the British market was open encouraged other countries to erect tariff walls against us. He believed it had the opposite effect. By flinging away our open markets we should throw away our best card. If we closed our markets there would be no more advantage to the foreigner in dealing with us than with any other nation. Our open markets had made us the best customer among the countries of the world, and those open markets secured better terms for our traders than the finesse of any statesman with the weapon of retaliation in his hand. The open-market policy, besides, encouraged other countries to establish friendly relations with us, to fear the loss of those relations, and to refrain from interference when we were engaged in extending our Empire. The British Empire could not have existed in its present state had it not been for our open markets, and if the Government erected tariff barriers jealousy against England would assume a dangerous shape in all other countries.

Finally, he wanted to know what was the attitude of the Government. Retaliation was on their lips, but protection was in their hearts. With one important exception Ministers had made protectionist speeches. The doctrine of plenary inspiration had received a new interpretation in Ministerial speeches, because Ministers, having apparently accepted the same doctrine of inspiration, had all spoken with differing voices. He wished to know which was the true voice. The Government were supported by those who made protectionist speeches, who had set their hearts on protection, and would be content with nothing less. They would be kept in office by protectionist votes, and he believed that the protectionists were sufficiently good bargainers not to give their votes for nothing. If their votes were given to the Government the protectionists would expect the Government to pursue a protectionist policy whether they liked it or not. The Colonial Secretary had said the Government would support those who honestly supported the Government policy. Great stress was laid on the word "honestly," and that raised a doubt in his mind, or rather it left him in no doubt. He did not believe that Unionist free-traders could "honestly" support the policy of the Government. It was the duty of every honest and convinced free-trader to vote for free trade now, when, for the first time, a clear and definite issue was presented to the House. It would be a different thing if it were a sincere and convinced free-trade Government that asked for this power of retaliation. He would be reluctant to do so, but in such a case he would agree. But this Government was tarred with the brush of protection. If the Prime Minister had, in September, spoken the words uttered the other day by the President of the Board of Trade, the free-trade members of the Cabinet would not have resigned. But they were allowed to retire, and the protectionists were exalted to great honour. The speech of the President of the Board of Trade seemed like a death-bed repentance; he did not believe in death-bed repentances; and as a free-trader he could not possibly give a vote of confidence in a Government which contained members expressing the views of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Colonial Secretary—in a Government of unsettled convictions and divergent opinions, that had played and dallied with a question of the greatest national importance, and that, in a great national crisis, had shown no power to guide or control. The Unionist Party was split into two sections because they had two leaders, one of whom had led too much and the other too little. The result was deplorable, but matters could not be mended by compromising with conscience, by crying "peace" when there was no peace, or by giving a cowardly and vacillating support to a policy which in their hearts they detested and condemned.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor) said that references were continually being made to "the traditional policy" of the Conservative Party, and the free-fooders had claimed that they were following that policy. But as far back as 1891 the National Union of Conservative Associations unanimously passed resolutions in favour of—

> "The extension of commerce upon a preferential basis throughout all parts of the British Empire," and "expressing the earnest expectation that Her Majesty's Government will see their way clear before the next electoral campaign to make some decisive declaration of their intention to promote mutually favouring Customs arrangements between the Colonies and the mother country."

Therefore it was not the free-fooders, but the main body of the Party, the supporters of the Government at the present time, that were more nearly supporting the traditional policy of the Conservative Party. He was in favour of ideal free trade, but it was useless to talk about "the expansion of natural demand"—as free trade had been defined by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Berwick—when that expansion was forcibly restricted by the action of other nations. We had never had free trade, and he feared that it was as Utopian as universal citizenship or universal peace. There were aspects of our trade which pointed to the necessity of some fiscal change. Till lately Bridport in Dorsetshire had had a large trade to North Brittany in cotton fishing-nets made from cotton-twine. By the imposition about eight years ago of a 20 per cent. duty in France upon cotton-twine that trade had been destroyed. He knew of a pottery in the Midlands the owner of which had decided to transfer his works to Germany, as he would then be able to sell his goods in that country without paying import duties and still be able to bring his surplus stock to this country free. The result would be that a number of hands would be discharged in this country, and Germans employed in their places. Another case was that of a publisher who wished to reprint an American edition of his books. The cost of the printing in United States was £5,000 more than in this country, but, as it would cost £20,000 to import the books into the United States owing to the 25 per cent, duty on English books, the publisher had decided to have them printed in that country. Was not that a loss to British workers directly due to the hostile United States tariff? Tariff reformers desired to retain these trades for the benefit of our own people, for if the present policy continued they would certainly be sacrificed. Some alteration must be made. He did not approve of Lord Rosebery's "commercial repose." There was a danger of our being like the ostrich who put his head in the sand; we should awake to find some of our best feathers plucked, and very meagre, sorry objects we should then be. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Member for Croydon, speaking of German iron, imported into Great Britain, had said that we resold it as ships to Germany, so that dumping was really an advantage to us. But how long was that likely to go on? As soon as Germany had succeeded in squeezing out or killing the production of iron here she would put up her prices to suit her own trade. It could not be too strongly emphasised that tariff reform was desired not to assist one trade at the expense of the general taxpayer, in the old protective sense, but for the purpose of defence. There was all the difference in the world between putting up a shelter to preserve a plant which would naturally be hardy and which would only be made tender by being sheltered, and putting up a shelter to prevent its being blown down by a foreign hurricane. He was entirely opposed to bolstering up a particular industry for its express benefit, but it was a very different thing to defend our trade against the action of commercial rivals. Cheapness was not our only concern. It was no use being able to buy in the cheapest market if we had no market in which to sell our own goods to get money with which to buy. They had heard a great deal about cheapness. Cheap food was very desirable, but it should not be forgotten that regular employment was even more so. He was not committed to any precise tax on food; and he did not vote for the repeal of the registration duty on corn. He maintained that if a small duty such as that, or not very much greater, were maintained for the purpose of welding the Empire together, so long as its imposition did not increase the cost of living, it was a policy at which they ought all to aim; and he was very glad to gather that the Government would not be opposed to something of that kind.

They were told that the Tariff Commission was of very little use; but he did not agree with that view. It was most essential that they should not commit themselves to a definite policy until they had had a scientific inquiry; and he would not be prepared to say what tax should be put on this or that article until the matter had been carefully considered by experts. A Royal Commission was suggested; but he doubted whether very much would be gained by adopting that course. If such a Commission spent all its time arguing in the abstract between the merits of free trade, or protection, or self-defence they would not get very far. It was quite certain that as long as foreign countries were succeeding under a protectionist policy, while the trade of this country was remaining stationary or not advancing at the same rate, the people of this country would become more and more in favour of some tariff reform. He looked forward with the utmost confidence, in the long run, to a change from the present system; and he believed the Government would be authorised to make it by the vast majority of the electors. A great deal had been said about the difficulty of arranging Colonial preference, because this country would have to make bargains with the Colonies. He did not fear a bargain as much as some hon. Gentlemen did, who said that bargains were causes of quarrel, and that this country could not make a bargain with the Colonies without the risk of a quarrel. Ordinary business experience showed that bargains were, as a rule, for mutual advantage, and that they were more frequently sources of gain to both parties than sources of quarrel. He thought that that would be the result of colonial preference. He was glad the Colonial Secretary appealed to his hon. friends and also to hon. Gentlemen opposite not to close the door to colonial preference as probably it could be worked to the advantage of this country and also to the advantage of the Colonies, and would weld the Empire together. He had heard with the greatest satisfaction the proposal for the solidification of the Empire by trade exchanges between its units, and the extension, as far as possible, of the principle of a *Zollverein*. A commercial union, not less than a political union, was a valuable setting for the jewels of the British Crown, and he protested against perpetually smarting under the disadvantages of one-sided free trade and unfair foreign competition, such as were occasioned by free imports into this country when hostile tariff walls were erected against British goods in foreign countries. This present system under modern circumstances represented the forces of dogmatic pedantry and alleged political economy against those of practical business experience.

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) said he desired to address the House from a point of view which had not been sufficiently considered up to the present—viz., the agricultural point of view. Looked at from that point of view the policy of the Government was simply a policy of taxing the agriculturist in every direction and, at the same time, not giving him any advantage at all. The President of the Board of Trade put forward the present official policy; of retaliation but they were told there was a much stronger policy behind it. He admitted that the policy of retaliation would not hurt the agriculturist as much as the other policy which lay behind it. That was the policy of the Prime Minister which, as far as it was possible to understand it, was the policy of the half-way house. The Prime Minister's policy was to impose taxes only on manufactured articles. The effect of that policy would be that every farmer, and every agricultural labourer, would have to pay more for everything be had to buy; the tendency would be that wages would fall; and the actual result would be that the farmers would be crippled and the labourers would be crippled. That would be a bad thing for those who had to live on the land and by the land. He was confirmed in that view by what had been said at the Central Chamber of Agriculture by a well-know Agriculturist, Mr. Rider Haggard, who said that the policy of the Prime Minister would nearly approach ruin, and appealed to the farmers to resist it to the last. That was the opinion of a gentleman who was a Conservative and whose opinion in the matter would be treated with respect by agriculturists. Mr. Haggard also said that it was all very well for the leaders of his Party to say, "Jump into the fiscal river and when you are beginning to sink, Mr. Balfour in a boat will be ready to pull you out. He did not believe in Mr. Balfour's boat, it might be wanted when it was not there. There was no half-way house on the steep road which ran from free trade to protection, they must have one or the other." He himself thought that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division was very well advised when, the other day, he did not venture to refer to what the effect the Prime Minister's policy would be on agriculturists. A stranger in the House would, with the exception of two or three sentences, have thought from his speech that the right hon. Gentleman was a great manufacturer and not a great agriculturist, as the whole tenor of his speech was what the policy would do for the manufacturers. The right hon. Gentleman was the leader of the agriculturists; but he did not say a word as to how the policy of the Prime Minister would affect them, because he knew that that policy meant certain ruin for farmers. The right hon. Gentleman also supported the policy of the ex-Colonial Secretary. He himself was willing to admit that on the face of it that policy appeared to be to the advantage of the agriculturist. That was the policy of the "whole hogger," which would put taxes on all round. He had looked in to that scheme to see what advantage it would be to agriculturists, and although he would be prepared to make sacrifices himself and would not add to the cost of the living of the working classes of this country for his own benefit. He must give his advice to his Agricultural friends upon its merit, and not upon sentiment alone.

Examining the scheme he found that it was essentially a manufacturers and Colonial one for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham stated in the most frank way that this country was not an agricultural country and never would be, and that the main source of the prosperity of the country was its great manufactures. The essence of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme was to pretend to benefit agriculturists and throw dust in their eyes and persuade them that they would be better off under protection. The tax the right hon. Gentleman proposed on agricultural produce was 5 per cent. only as compared with 10 per cent. on manufactured articles and a 2s. duty a quarter on wheat. Mr. Martin Sutton, a great authority on this question, declared in a letter to *The Times* that a 2s. duty on wheat would not be the slightest advantage to the farmers, and that a 10s. duty was the smallest duty that would be of any use to them. As regarded the 5 per cent. duty on dairy produce and meat, it should be remembered that at the present moment there was enormous competition from the Colonies and the essence of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme was to stimulate further competition from the Colonies. The object of the tax on dairy produce and meat was not to help the agricultural interest in this country, but to help Canada and Australia by stimulating the production of meat, butter, and cheese, in those countries. As regarded meat, it should be remembered that half the meat now imported was colonial; and therefore, the English agriculturists would not get the benefit of the 5 per cent. duty, but would only get the benefit of half of it. The west of England knew already what colonial competition was. In Somersetshire the Cheddar cheese industry had suffered severely by the importation of Canadian cheese and in many places it had quite destroyed the making of cheese. As regarded dairy produce, the result of the tax would be to further stimulate colonial competition as well as to increase the price of feeding stuffs which were imported from foreign countries. They might be told they could use maize instead, on which no tax was to be put. Maize might be very valuable, but it could not be used entirely by itself. It was not, moreover, of such value as oilcake or cotton-cake upon which 10 per cent duty would be imposed. Then it was said that the farmers would have plenty of corn offals; and that, owing to the duty on flour. The farmer had, however, some experience already on that point. When the duty of 5d. cwt. on flour was put on, it was said it would be an immense advantage to the farmers; but it turned out, as was stated by himself at the time, that offals were exported to the very countries which were competing with the British farmer in dairy produce. The offals were exported because the freight abroad was cheaper than railway rates at home, and the drawback of 2s. 6d. a ton on offals exported was also an important stimulus. Under the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham the exporters of offals would get a bounty of 5s. a ton, and the inducement to export offals abroad doubled. The Prime Minister confirmed that view, as, speaking on the removal of the corn tax, he said—

> "He was by no means certain that the extra quantity of wheat offals milled in this country went to the farmer, as the drawback offered an extra inducement to millers to export them to the rivals of farmers on the Continent. He was convinced, he said, that fiscally it was a good tax, but the farmers had more cause to complain of it than any other class."

The truth was that it was much easier to export offals than consign them to distant counties at home owing to the heavy rates charged by the railway companies. He ventured to say that the Government would be doing more good to the agriculturists if, instead of putting a 2s. tax on wheat, to give preference to the colonial farmer, they were to forbid the railway companies giving preferential rates to foreign goods. The late Mr. Hanbury urged on the Board of Trade to prevent the present state of things under which bacon, butter and cheese from abroad was taken from Southampton to London for 6s. a ton, whereas the same British produce was charged 17s. 11d. per ton. The farmers should insist the Government should provide that foreign goods should be charged same rates as English goods, and that the English goods should be carried at the same rates as foreign goods. Mr. Chamberlain's scheme by its tax on feeding stuffs would destroy the milk trade which was none too prosperous by increasing the cost of the production of milk.

They were being told of the good old days of protection. They might have been good old days, but only for a very limited class indeed. The farmers suffered very much in the early part of the century. Evidence was given before Select Committees of this House in 1821 and 1833. Before the former, a large farmer in Somerset said he sold wheat at 64s. a quarter, paid his men 8s. a week wages, and considered that the right price for wheat was 10s. a bushel. In 1833 when wheat was 52s. 11d. a quarter, nearly double what it was at present, another Somersetshire farmer complained that if wheat fell to 50s. a quarter poor land would go out of cultivation altogether. He added that his labourers who were paid 8s. a week were better off than he was. Agriculture must have been in a very bad state at that period when a farmer told a Committee of this House that his labourers receiving 8s. a week were better off than he was. If the extreme protectionists had their way, as no doubt they would if the Government continued on the slide they were on, agriculture would be in as bad a state as it was before the repeal of the Corn Laws. The farmers and the labourers would suffer and the landlords would get very little advantage as shown by evidence given before the Select Committees he had referred to, that land was unlet and rents falling owing to tenants having lost their capital though price of wheat, was double or treble what it now was. As an agriculturist he, therefore, most strongly supported the Amendment of his right hon. friend.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir Howard Vinceant.*) put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

NEW BILL.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACTS (EXTENSION).

Bill to extend the Public Libraries Acts to counties, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Kenyon, Mr. Bryce, Sir James Rankin, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Lloyd-George, and Mr. Samuel Evans.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACTS (EXTENSION) BILL.

"To extend the Public Libraries Acts to counties," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 23rd February, and to be printed. [Bill 56.]

Adjourned at half after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 15*th February*, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Clyde Valley Electric Power; Lothians Electric Power; Young and Bell's Patents.

And also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier [H.L.]; Matlock and District Gas [H.L.]; Portmadoc, Beddgelert, and South Snowdon Railway [H.L.]; Great Western Railway [H.L.]; Isle of Thanet Light Railways [H.L.].

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Marylebone Chapels (Saint James, Westmoreland Street). Petition of the right hon. Robert George Windsor Clive Baron Windsor, and of the Reverend William Barker, Rector of the Parish of St. Marylebone, Trustees of the Chapel of Saint James, Westmoreland Street, praying for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the sale of the Chapel of Saint James, Westmoreland Street, and for other purposes connected therewith; together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

Ilford Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Lothians Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. Presented, and read 1^a.

Young and Bell's Patents Bill [H.L.]. Presented; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Preston and Blackburn Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Weaver Navigation (Constitution and Finance) Bill [H.L.]; Withnell Gas Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3121. Egypt (Trade, 1887–1902).

CHINA, No. 2 (1904).

Correspondence respecting the Russian occupation of Manchuria and Newchwang.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Return for the month of November, 1903.

TRANSVAAL.

Further correspondence regarding the Transvaal labour question (in continuation of [Cd. 1898], February, 1904). Presented (by Command) and ordered to lie on the Table.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS FOUNDATION (CAPITAL AND INCOME ACCOUNTS, 1902–1903).

Accounts of the receipt and expenditure of the capital and of the income derived from the lands and other property held for the benefit of Greenwich Hospital and the foundation of Samuel Travers, Esquire, for the year ended 31st March, 1903; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES, WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION SCHEMES, INDUSTRIAL AND PROVIDENT SOCIETIES, AND TRADES UNIONS.

Reports of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, for the year ended 31st December, 1903.

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) (NON-CONGESTED DISTRICTS).

Account for the year ended 31st December, 1903.

GREEK LOAN OF 1832.

Annual Account for 1903.

SUPERANNUATION (PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS).

Treasury Minute, dated 30th January, 1904, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Inspector-General in Bankruptcy, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired on the Public Service are required. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

MESSAGE FROM THE KING.

THE LORD STEWARD (The Earl of PEMBROKE) brought down the following message from the King—

"I have received with great satisfaction the loyal and dutiful expression of your thanks for the Speech with which I have opened the present session of Parliament."

ADDRESS.

The King's Answer to the Address of Tuesday the 2nd instant reported; and Address and Answer to be printed and published.

WEI-HAI-WEI—AN UNFOUNDED RUMOUR.

EARL SPENCER: I am not sure whether the noble Marquess has any further information to communicate with reference to the answer he was good enough to give to me the other day about Wei-hai-Wei.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): A telegram was sent from the Admiralty with reference to the story of Wei-hai-Wei being used as a base of attack upon Port Arthur by the Japanese fleet. It was dated 12th February and was as follows—

"Admiralty to Commander-in-Chief, China Station. Rumour current in St. Petersburg causing great exasperation that Wei-hai-Wei, with Great Britain's connivance, was used by Japanese as a base for attack on Port Arthur. Important that His Majesty's Government should be in a position to give absolute contradiction. Report without delay."

The Admiralty has now received the following answer—

"Hong-kong, February 12, 1904. Rumour absolutely without foundation. Wei-hai-Wei did not even know operations were proceeding until I telegraphed fight. First intimation of operations came through Chefoo from steamer calling there from Port Arthur. Wei-hai-Wei's first direct knowledge of belligerent proceedings was the visit of steamer "Fuping" to report circumstances of her being fired on. Air out here is full of baseless rumour obviously deliberately concocted."

The "Fuping," as the noble Earl will remember, is the steamer which was fired at as she was leaving Port Arthur.

AFFAIRS OF SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE—CONDITION OF MACEDONIA.

*LORD NEWTON, who had given notice "To call attention to the correspondence recently presented to Parliament respecting the affairs of South-Eastern Europe and to move for further Papers," said: My Lords, just about a year ago I called attention to the threatening aspect of affairs in Macedonia, and the Foreign Secretary, in his reply, made what I think was the fullest statement that has yet been made with regard to British policy in that part of the world, and the most important statement which was elicited from him was that His Majesty's Government had determined, in conjunction with the other signatory Powers to the Treaty of Berlin, to leave the decision of the question to the Austrian and Russian Governments. A year has passed since then, and I do not think it is any exaggeration to say that the state of Macedonia and of European Turkey generally has gone steadily from bad to worse. Since the date of the reform scheme which was put forward by the Austrian and Russian Governments and accepted by the Porte, twelve months have elapsed. During that period many thousands of persons have lost their lives, some in fair fighting, others in the course of massacre; many hundreds of villages have been destroyed, and many thousands of refugees are now existing in a miserable state both inside and outside of the provinces in question.

Upon whom does the responsibility for this state of things lie? The majority of persons in this country have no difficulty whatever in determining upon whom the responsibility rests. The majority of persons in this country place the whole responsibility upon the Turkish Government, but I cannot help pointing out that in many instances there appears to be a somewhat erroneous conception of the situation. It is generally assumed—more especially in ecclesiastical circles—that the present condition of affairs in Macedonia is due to the general persecution of the Christian inhabitants by the Mussulmans. It has been already pointed out more than once, but perhaps it is worth while pointing it out again, that that is not an exact definition of the present state of things. The present state of things arises directly from the determination of the Bulgarian inhabitants of Macedonia to free themselves from Turkish rule, and I do not know that they can be much blamed for that determination. I would observe to your Lordships that this contention of mine is amply justified by the fact that the insurrection which is maintained by the Bulgarian inhabitants of Macedonia, receives not only no support from the Greeks and the other Christians in the provinces, but is actively opposed by them.

To return to the question of responsibility. I admit to the full the responsibility of the Turkish Government; but that responsibility must be shared by the irreconcilable section of the Macedonian insurgents; it must be shared also, in a more modified degree, by the Bulgarian Government, and, lastly, I regret to say it must be shared to some extent by the Austrian and Russian Governments, which have undertaken, with complete unsuccess, the pacification of the country. Dealing first of all with the responsibility of Turkey, no one can deny that the Turkish Government is the original culprit in the matter. No one in their senses would attempt to defend the massacres and the outrages that have been perpetrated by the Turkish troops, and no one will deny, or attempt to deny, the continual obstruction of the Turkish Government to all proposed reforms—an obstruction which is due to the innate stupidity of the Ottoman Government. But, at the same time, with the best will in the world, supposing that the Turkish Government had really been anxious to carry out the reforms which have now been pressed upon them, I for my part am unable to see how they could have succeeded. During the last year—you may say far more than that—there has been a permanent insurrection going on in the country. The position of the Turks is very much like to a man whose house is on fire and who is surrounded by his friends who order him to put out the fire according to their instructions, but in his endeavours to put it out, he finds that it is continually being set ablaze in other parts. The fact is, the Turkish Government is totally unable to put an end to the insurrection, and the insurrection in itself is sufficient to prevent the introduction of any reforms. I say that the Turkish Government, so far, has shown itself absolutely incapable of putting down the insurrection, and, as a proof of the almost complete demoralisation of the Turkish Administration, I am credibly informed that the insurgents draw the greater quantity of their military supplies through Turkey and by means of the Turkish officials and the Turkish officers.

But there is another point which, I think, must have forced itself upon everyone who has taken the trouble to read the last two Blue-books. I maintain that it is as plain as possible, and I maintained so last year, that the revolutionary committees have not the slightest intention of allowing the reforms to be introduced. The object of the revolutionary committees or their leaders, or, at all events, the object of some of the leaders, has been to render the introduction of reforms impossible; and, what is much worse, they have in some instances, I regret to say in many instances, deliberately endeavoured, by the commission of crimes themselves, to goad the Turks into perpetrating atrocities on a large scale. If anybody doubts the truth of this assertion I need only refer him to the despatches from the Consuls who so ably represent us in that part of the world. The Blue-books teem with evidence of the crimes of some of these revolutionary bands and of their methods, and I repeat that this information does not come from the Turkish Government, but is supplied by independent witnesses such as the Greeks and His Majesty's Consuls. I should like to quote one single instance. In June last year I observe that the Greek Minister in London handed to the noble Marquess a list of between 100 and 200 Greeks who had been deliberately murdered, apparently in cold blood, by the Bulgarian insurgents in pursuance of their irreconcilable programme. These men have not only murdered inoffensive men, and women too, in cold blood, but they have burnt villages and blown up railways and banks, and one of their most notorious leaders announced in the summer of last year that if the committees were suppressed he would take measures for the assassination of the English, the French, or the German Consul in Salonika.

The Prime Minister was not long ago much found fault with for his version of the balance of criminality. I admit at once that, if it is a question of quantity the balance of criminality is decidedly in favour of the Turks. They have undoubtedly burnt more villages, massacred more people, and committed atrocities on a much larger scale than their opponents. But what I should like to point out is this, that the work of the irreconcilable insurgents has been of precisely the same character as that of the Turkish troops, although not upon the same scale, and if it comes to a question of quality and of character I am not at all sure that the crimes perpetrated by the insurgents are not the worst of the two. Although the crimes committed by the Turkish troops are outrageous in their nature, yet they are crimes which are perpetrated by men who in many instances are little better than semi-barbarians, and who have been goaded by extreme provocation; on the other hand, the deliberate crimes of the Bulgarian insurgents, under some of their leaders, have been committed by Christian and highly educated men.

With regard to the responsibility of the Bulgarian Government, which I said was a lesser form of responsibility, I think that the position of that Government is well defined by Mr. Elliot, who wrote in the summer of last year that the limits of the Bulgarian Government are prescribed by the amount of repression which the country will stand. If I diagnose the Blue-book correctly, the country will not stand any repression at all. At all events, the Bulgarian Government has never made any very serious effort to cope with the difficulty. It cannot be denied that the bands are formed there and start from Bulgaria; that they retreat there when they are too severely pressed; that they are in many cases officered by officers of the Bulgarian Army; and that they are frequently armed with rifles taken from the Government stores. There is an active and flourishing manufacture of bombs carried on in the country, and when the insurgent chiefs return to Bulgaria they meet with triumphant receptions. But the Bulgarian Government supplies the one humorous touch in this gloomy tragedy. Towards the end of October, when the prospects as to peace were slightly better, it was proposed that troops on both sides should be disbanded, and Mr. Elliot explained that the Bulgarian Government would be glad to send as many men home as possible in order that they might take part in the general election. I am not surprised at this desire of the Bulgarian Government, because I once happened to be in Bulgaria whilst a general election was going on, and I remember observing that every voter as he approached the ballot was taken charge of by a soldier, who took care that he voted the right way. I imagine that older Governments must wish that they had similar means at their disposal in order to secure a majority when a general election occurs.

I now pass from the responsibility of Turkey, of the insurgents, and of the Bulgarian Government, to the responsibility of the Austrian and Russian Governments. As far back as February, 1902, it had begun to dawn even upon these two Governments that the situation in Macedonia was threatening, and in that month, to use their own affected language, the two Governments were having a "loyal exchange of views." For a whole year they continued to loyally exchange views with no result; but in 1903, owing in great measure to the efforts made by the noble Marquess, they succeeded in producing a feeble scheme of reform which was accepted by the noble Marquess and by the other signatory Powers to the Treaty of Berlin, the noble Marquess being judicious enough to accept it in principle and to reserve to himself the right of making further suggestions that he might think necessary. This scheme was not happy in its start. It dealt largely with the question of the gendarmerie, and amongst other things recommended a general amnesty. A general amnesty took place; but what was the result? A good many thousand prisoners were released, and, as the Consuls pointed out would be the case before it happened, they all immediately went off and joined the insurgent bands. Another recommendation was that a certain proportion of the gendarmerie should be Christians, but I gather from a despatch from one of the Consuls that each one of these Christian gendarmes required a special bodyguard to protect him in doing his duty. Fighting was going on all the time. I will quote a passage from the Blue-book showing the view with which the Austrian Government treated the threatening danger. In the summer of last year Count Goluchowski, the Austrian Foreign Secretary, was asked by our Ambassador how things were going on, and he replied that he hoped that things there would turn out less bad than they generally expected, and the foundation for this optisism was that he had received very few telegrams lately from Macedonia.

Owing to the pressure exercised by the noble Marquess—and I will say this for the noble Marquess, that he and Sir N. O'Conor, our Ambassador at Constantinople, appear to be the only two persons who throughout this business have shown any sense of the gravity of the situation—towards the end of October the Austrian and Russian Governments put their heads together and came out with a new scheme, which is known as the Murzsteg scheme. I will not go into the details of this scheme, but it was submitted to the noble Marquess, and he approved of it generally, making the same reservation that he had made with regard to the former scheme, and adding the somewhat obvious observation that there was no provision in the scheme for the payment of anybody in connection with it. In order to show the dilatory procedure of the Austrian and Russian Governments, I should like to point out that on 4th November this scheme was presented to the Porte and flatly refused. Thereupon His Majesty's Government were naturally rather perturbed, and again applied to Count Goluchowski. Count Goluchowski, declining absolutely to be hurried, said increased pressure must be exercised on the Porte, but first of all careful examination of the answer must be made. On 9th November, the Russian and Austrian Governments sent a Note saying that they were—to use their own language—"painfully embarrassed" by the reply they received. People who receive a flat refusal generally are painfully embarrassed. On 24th November, the Porte consented to accept the reforms in principle, but reserved the right of opposing them in detail.

On 30th November, a step further was taken. The two Governments actually agreed upon two assessors, but I should like to call attention to a notable fact with regard to them. I observe that the Austrian assessor was apparently selected on account of his knowledge of Russian, not the language which one would imagine to be the most useful in the circumstances. The assessors were agreed upon, but both Governments considered that it was inadvisable to send out any foreign officers as yet—this beingone of the suggestions made by the noble Marquess. On 4th December the Russian Government also deprecated sending any European officers out, as being a course likely to arouse the susceptibilities of the Sultan. On 5th December the two Governments, as if they had not already wasted sufficient time, actually proposed to leave the selection of the officer, who was to reorganise the gendarmerie,to the Porte. On 12th December the Austrian Government were still uncertain as to the nature of the European officers who were to be employed. On 9th December Sir N. O'Conor called the attention of the Russian Ambassador in Constantinople to the necessity of doing something, and Sir N. O'Conor says that the Russian Ambassador appeared to think that there was something to be said for it. On 15th December Sir N. O'Conor wrote home, and I think a quotation from this despatch really places the whole difficulty in a nutshell. He wrote—

> "Every week's delay makes the chances of the reforms pacifying the country less and the probability of a fresh outbreak in the spring greater. Should the preliminary negotiations even proceed a good deal faster than hitherto, the General can hardly arrive much before the end of the year, nor is it probable that the foreign officers who are to be attached to him will have all arrived even by that date. Probably January will be well advanced before any scheme of reorganisation is prepared and ready for adoption. By that time the spring will be at hand with its attendant dangers."

A few days after that the noble Marquess himself lost a certain amount of his inexhaustible patience and wrote—

> "It cannot be said that even the initial steps towards putting it into practical effect have been accomplished."

As I have already remarked, the noble Marquess and Sir N. O'Conor are really the only people throughout this business who seem to have taken any real interest in it, and who have made any suggestions. I daresay the noble Marquess will tell me that a certain amount has been done since the Blue-book closed. The

Blue-book practically closes with the despatch which I have just read. I do not exactly know what the position is now, but the position after about six months of the first programme had gone by was this, that there was nothing to show for it except the presence of the Inspector-General Hilmi Pasha, and two Swedish offiicers, neither of whom could speak Turkish or had anything to do.

It is true that some progress has been made. Since the Blue-book closed, an Italian general has been selected to reorganise the gendarmerie, and has arrived, I understand, at Constantinople. The two assessors are, I believe, at Salonika, where they are working under the superintendence of Hilmi Pasha, who shows no desire to encourage their journey into the interior of the country. What I think this Blue-book does show is that the Austrian and Russian Governments have proved themselves quite incapable of dealing with the situation, and I do not think myself, although the noble Marquess may not admit that I am right, that the reason is very difficult to find. These two Powers—Austria and Russia—who have been called in as physicians to minister to the disease of the sick man, also consider themselves to be his heirs and I have no doubt each of them considers himself entitled to the position of residuary legatee. It is clear to me that these two Governments have been just as much occupied in watching each other as they have been in superintending and introducing reforms. What I want to point out is that time is everything in this business. All the indications point to an outbreak before long. I myself contemplated a visit to that part of the world, and I have been making inquiries on my own account and am told that anybody who thinks about going out there had better lose no time because the end of March is about the latest period on which one can count upon even the present conditions being maintained. Owing to the absurd and dilatory tactics of these twoGovernments, who have done little else but play—involuntarily, no doubt—into the hands of the Sultan and the Porte, precious time has been lost.

There remain about six weeks in which to put matters right. As I said a moment ago, an outbreak generally seems to be anticipated about the end of March; but it is not merely an outbreak of insurrection which is anticipated, but a war between Turkey and Bulgaria. That war appeared imminent a year ago, but it looks very much more imminent now, and, unless I entirely misread the signs, both sides are eager for a fight. The Bulgarians are more prepared than they were this time last year. They have got an excellent Army, which man for man, is probably much superior to the Turkish Army; and, on the other hand, the Turks feel no doubt that the situation has gone on long enough and that if they can go to war and defeat the Bulgarians they will at all events secure a certain amount of peace. In view of the gravity of the situation—a gravity which I do not think can well be exaggerated—I appeal to the noble Marquess whether the time has not come when he should produce the alternative which he alluded to, not only in his despatch, but in the speech which he made on the Address. The noble Marquess made use of these significant words in the speech which he delivered on the Address—

> "If these schemes should fail to produce the desired result, we reserve to ourselves entire liberty to take into consideration and to propose alternative and more far-reaching measures."

Well, my Lords, I do not know whether the noble Marquess considers that the time for making suggestions and proposals has arrived. I have no idea what his reply will be to me on this point. But, at all events, if he does not consider that the time is yet ripe for these alternative proposals, I presume he will have no objection to making a statement, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, that all the forces of our diplomacy will be exercised for the purpose of localising this war if it should break out, and of limiting it to the two countries which are directly concerned.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for further Papers respecting the affairs of South-Eastern Europe."—(*Lord Newton.*)

THE EARL OF LYTTON: My Lords, in spite of the extremely humorous description which the noble Lord has given of the situation, I think everyone will agree that its gravity is quite sufficient to justify a general discussion on the matter in your Lordships' House. The present moment is a very critical one, because everyone feels that time is getting on and that before very long the moment will have arrived when the labours of the reformers who are working at this moment to bring about a peaceable settlement of this Eastern question will necessarily be brought to an end. It it obvious that all discussions in Parliament upon matters of foreign affairs are necessarily handicapped to a certain extent by a feeling of constraint and the knowledge of the necessity of carefully choosing words which will not be misinterpreted in the far regions to which they will be immediately telegraphed. It is obvious that the Minister in charge of our foreign affairs cannot make a speech on matters of foreign policy in Parliament without very great attention being paid to everything he says, and without in some cases his words being received with a certain disposition to misunderstand them. At any rate, he cannot take part in such discussions as if they were matters of ordinary debate. Therefore, though I join with my noble friend in desiring to urge upon the noble Marquess that he should give us some more reassuring evidence than has yet been put before the public with regard to a settlement of this question, I disclaim any intention whatever of wishing to embarrass his position or to complicate the difficulties with which he is now necessarily confronted.

I agree that the noble Marquess has shown himself throughout these negotiations to be the Minister most in earnest in seeking for reform—a matter for which we owe him a great debt of gratitude. I only intervene, therefore, to state the effect which the Blue-book has had upon myself. I feel very little interest in any attempts to work out the balance of criminality, or to settle the precise degree of responsibility for what has taken place in the past. My interest is not in the past. These outrages and acts of violence which have taken place are matters which we all regret, but my anxiety is rather for the future and what is going to take place. I leave out, therefore, any attempt to try and lodge the responsibility for what has taken place upon any particular shoulders, but I feel that no one can read these Blue-books without feeling that three facts stand out very markedly from them. The first is the failure of the present system of dual control, which has been left exclusively in the hands of Austria and Russia—the failure, that is, on their part to restore peace in the troublous area or to produce reforms which are received with any degree of satisfaction. The second fact is the certainty that, in a very few weeks, the insurrection will break out again, with the extreme imminence of war between Bulgaria and Turkey. And the third fact is that Great Britain is really the Power to whom all concerned look with the greatest amount of confidence, and the Power which appears to have the power to control the course of events. Putting these three facts together, it follows that a very considerable responsibility rests upon the shoulders of His Majesty's Government; and it is unnecessary to prove that, if they have it in their power to prevent a renewal of these acts of violence of which the Balkan Peninsula has been the scene so recently, and which are an insult and an affront to the whole civilised world, and to prevent an outbreak of war between Turkey and Bulgaria, and secure both these ends, they will have gained the gratitude, not only of everybody in this country, but of all the nations in Europe. The point, therefore, of the utmost importance at this moment is whether these two objects can be accomplished.

The noble Earl the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs has laid down two conditions as necessary for any permanent settlement of this question. The first is, that Turkey should realise that her administration in practice, whatever it might be in theory, is utterly unsatisfactory; that it is a gross violation of all her treaty obligations, and a menace, not only to the security of her own rule, but to the peace of neighbouring States. The second is that the law-abiding population in that part of the world must be made to understand both the ability and determination of the European Powers to safeguard them against any misgovernment in the future. These are two conditions which may be accepted, so far as they go, as satisfactory by all who are interested in the matter; but the point which follows is, what has been done to satisfy, in any way, these conditions? So far as the Blue-book goes I venture to say that it leaves one on the last page with the idea that nothing has been done to satisfy either of these two conditions. A year has passed by since the mandate was given to the two Powers in question to carry out the resettlement of this part of the world. It was not until 25th November that they produced, and got the Porte to accept, any scheme of reform which would make matters the least bit better—that scheme, by the way, was put forward in the first instance by the noble Marquess himself—and the Blue-book ends on 28th December without any advance having been made whatever. The Porte merely gave a qualifying acceptance of those proposals of reform—accepted them, that is to say, in principle—and from that moment to the present, so far as we are aware, nothing whatever has been done in order to get them effectively carried out.

We have always been told that matters have been left to these two countries, because they are most interested in that situation. That, I think, no one could question; but is it not a fact that the mere interest which these two Powers have in that part of the world necessarily prevents them from being as active as one could wish in the cause of reform? My noble friend has said that they are like residuary legatees. If I might pursue that simile, I should say that they are like two trustees who have been left in charge of a ward whose fortune, at his death, would go to them—that is to say, that a man, in leaving his fortune to his successor, and after him to two other persons, had left those two other persons as trustees of the ward during his lifetime. In that case, would not the law have laid down that the mere interest which these two had in the death of that particular person did not make them qualified to be trustees in that situation? It seems to me that these two Powers are exactly in that position, and the very fact of their great interest in that part of the world makes their policy mistrusted rather than trusted. Well, they have at least produced a reform scheme which passes anything that has been proposed up to the present moment, but even that scheme has its short-comings. I should like to get to-day some further information from the noble Marquess with regard to the scheme—some information that will carry us further than the Blue-books which up to the present have been published—and some assurances as to the means which will be set on foot to get it carried out.

There are, in my opinion, several defects in the scheme. The first is that the Inspector-General, who is to have charge of the administration of the country for the next two years, is himself a Turk, and still subject to the control of the Sultan himself, and the policy which he pursues in the meantime will be a determining factor in his future career. Is it to be hoped that a man in that position, directly connected with the Government of Turkey, can act as independently as an administrator in those circumstances is bound to do? Then, too, the Inspector-General is a man who, so far as I can gather, is not likely to inspire great confidence in the minds of those who are creating disturbances in this part of the world. He has, to a large extent, already forfeited their confidence, and that I consider to be a very vital defect in this scheme of reform. Then there is the further point that the Turkish governors of the three provinces are left entirely independent of him. As your Lordships are probably aware, it is the practice in Turkey for every official to receive his orders direct from the Sultan, and they are enabled in many cases to override those who are placed over them. Therefore, I have very grave doubts whether, with the best will in the world, this Inspector-General can carry out a very effective administration of the country. Two assessors responsible to the Powers have been placed under him to advise and to watch his actions, but the powers of those two assessors are at present entirely indefinite. That is a matter upon which I hope we may possibly get a little more information, because it seems to me there is great likelihood that they will be referred to in order to justify anything that may happen and in order to share the responsibility of the Inspector-General, without having any power to get their wishes enforced.

Then, with regard to the gendarmerie—the reorganisation of which is satisfactory so far as it goes—what I should like to know is whether, when the reorganisation of the gendarmerie has taken place, the

European officers who have been introduced in order to carry out that reorganisation, will be placed in positions of command, and whether they will be assisted in any way in re-establishing order in the country. I should also like to know how many officers it is proposed should be sent by European Powers to help the gendarmerie to carry out their work. At present, so far as I can make out, there is only one officer sent by the Powers, and, no doubt, while these officers might be useful in reporting what is going on, it cannot be shown that they will be in any way an effective force in re-establishing order. Then there is another point which has not yet been referred to, namely, the exclusion of the vilayet of Adrianople from the scheme of reforms. Here is a case in which not even an attempt at reform has been made. That part of the country has been left altogether out of consideration. The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs imagines that so successful will be the reforms in the other parts of the Sultan's dominions that the Sultan himself, seeing how satisfactory they are, will be induced to include the part left out in the reorganisation. I cannot help thinking that that is a very sanguine view to take. I have not such confidence in this scheme of reform as laid down at present, to imagine that when it is carried out the Sultan will be so filled with admiration at the result that he will propose to extend it. I regard the exclusion of the vilayet of Adrianople as a serious defect in the scheme. So far as I can make out, no general amnesty is included. I see that in this case it has been replaced by a mixed Commission, both of Christian and Mahomedans, to try those brought before them for political offences. I cannot help thinking that this mixed tribunal of Christians and Mahomedans is not likely to have the same effect which the promise of an amnesty would have; that the absence of this promise is a defect in this particular scheme of reform, and that the scheme will fail altogether to inspire that spirit of confidence which the noble Earl said is so essential to the re-establishment of order.

The noble Marquess the Foreign Minister throughout these negotiations has repeatedly reserved to himself the right to propose more important and more far-reaching measures of reform when the moment should arise, and in view of the very critical situation in which we find ourselves I should like to ask him whether that moment has not now arrived. There are two circumstances which do not lead us to have great confidence in the future, which will necessitate still more delays, and will prevent the two Powers in charge from improving the methods which they have adopted in the past. First of all, there is the outbreak of war in the Far East, which must necessarily, to a very large extent, absorb the interest and attention of Russian Ministers; and, secondly, there is the fact that Austria herself is now occupied with internal affairs of very great importance. The Austrian Government has been met by opposition on the part of the Hungarians to her army policy, the result of which is that the Hungarian Parliament has refused to vote the necessary money for the raising of new recruits. No less than five military riots have already taken place, and the Austrian Government is very much occupied in this matter. Both of the two Powers concerned, in whose charge the affairs of Macedonia have been left, are more occupied at this moment with other affairs than before, and it is not likely that the future will bring any greater precipitancy on their part or will find them more active than they have been in the past; in fact, there is really little doubt that nothing short of a complete change of policy and the adoption of the proposal which the noble Marquess himself made in September last year will bring about a peaceful solution.

I cannot help feeling some regret that the opinion expressed in the noble Marquess's despatch of 29th September, was not expressed more strongly. But no doubt there were reasons for trying other methods in the first instance. If the noble Marquess is unable to concur in the view that it is necessary now to put forward that alternative scheme, I trust he will give us some reassurance as to the methods which will be employed to carry out the scheme of reforms which has been accepted. The opportunity at this moment is a favourable one for pressing still further the claims of this country in the Near East. There is the fact that these two Powers are occupied with other matters; there is, further, the act that this country is regarded with a greater degree of confidence than any other Power by the persons concerned in Macedonia. There have been petitions from the Mahomedans themselves memorialising the British Government to interfere, and reputed petitions have been sent in on the part of the insurgents to His Majesty's Government to the same effect. Then there is the feeling of Turkey herself. Turkey, who in this, as in other matters, remains about fifty years behind the times, still believes that Great Britain is a traditional supporter of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and has, owing to that feeling, great confidence in the British Government; and all the other independent States in that peninsula are beginning to look to Great Britain, as it were, as the defender of their national sentiments. In other words, all the parties concerned do look towards Great Britain with a considerable amount of confidence, and the mere fact that we are not interested in the same sense as the other two Powers gives to the British Government enormous authority on this question.

Many have urged, on the other hand, that the British Government has no interest in interfering in this matter, but I would remind your Lordships that it is a tradition of our Foreign Ministers, and has been ever since the Conference of Berlin, that Great Britain has great interests in the Near East—interests which she must, at all costs, support. It is true that the policy which was adopted by this country at that date has very considerably changed, just in the same sense that the policy of Russia has changed. In the days of the Treaty of Berlin, the policy upheld in this country was one of supporting the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, which was opposed to the Russian policy of setting up independent States in which Russia could exercise certain control. But from the day that Bulgaria freed herself from this Russian influence, and showed that an independent Power had been established with a considerable amount of influence, from the days, that is, when Northern and Southern Bulgaria were united and became a strong and independent Power, the policy of these two countries changed. The policy of Russia is merely one of keeping affairs simmering, or still posing as protector to these Slav nationalities, while encouraging the seditions and insurrections which go on in that part of the world. At the same time the policy of this country has, ever since that day, been to maintain the independence of these Powers as far as possible. It was the policy which the late Prime Minister (the Marquess of Salisbury) endeavoured as far as possible to carry out in regard to Armenia. Lord Salisbury, at the time that the Armenian difficulty was at its height, did his best to promote the consolidation of Armenia. He was opposed in that policy by Russia, and was obliged to give way on account of the opposition which was placed in the way by the other Powers. But, although the policy of this country and of Russia has changed since the days of the Berlin Treaty, I do not know why our interests should be less or our methods of protecting them less effective. At that time our interests were put forward and maintained by every effective means, and I would urge that, in so far as we have interests now, they should be put forward and backed up by means no less effective. Therefore, as I have said, I hope we shall get some reassurance that, as regards the present scheme of reforms, at any rate, all the influence of this country will be brought to bear to see that they are most effectively carried out. I would only remind your Lordships once more that the time in which anything can be done is getting very short. The daylight of temporary peace which has been enjoyed in that part of Europe is rapidly drawing to a close, and the night-time of war, bloodshed, and massacre, is rapidly approaching—a time at which all work of reform will necessarily be brought to an end.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN: My Lords, I think the House will feel that the noble Lord opposite has done good service in bringing forward this matter, and he has brought to bear his diplomatic experience in an effective manner in dealing with it. I am sure that the attendance in your Lordships House this afternoon does not adequately represent the feeling in the country regarding the importance and gravity of this subject. I do not pretend that as yet there is a very widespread and vigorous sentiment awakened in the country, but I feel that if there was in regard to Macedonia one-half or one-quarter of the trouble taken and the money spent through the Press and otherwise, in imparting information as there was with regard to affairs in South Africa four years ago, there would have been a very strong feeling indeed created throughout the country. As your Lordships will remember, the agitation which went on in South Africa at that time, nominally in the interests of those who were subjected to grievances, real or imaginary, was supposed to be, not merely on behalf of British subjects, but of all the persons in that region who were affected; in fact, we were told that steps should be taken for the relief of the oppressed. There can be no question about the oppression in the case of the Balkan Peninsula, and, though I am fully in accord with the main drift of my noble friend's statement, I cannot see altogether eye to eye with him in regard to some of his contentions. The noble Lord said that there was an erroneous conception, and added that it had obtained more especially in ecclesiastical circles. Well, I do not know that the impression he referred to is altogether confined to ecclesiastical circles—the impression, that is, that the responsibility in regard to this deplorable state of things primarily or principally rests upon the Turks.

LORD NEWTON: I said "not solely."

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN: The noble Lord says it is not correct to refer to the Mussulman persecutions as being solely responsible for the trouble. He also said that the insurgents received no encouragement from a large portion of the population, but I have not understood that these people have, on that account, been exempt from outrage and disabilities at the hands of the Turkish authorities. The noble Earl who spoke second in the debate said it was not of much interest to him to discuss the question of the balance of criminality; but, surely, that is not a mere academic question. We want to strengthen the hands of the noble Marquess in whatever action he may take on behalf of His Majesty's Government in pressing for reforms. You cannot put pressure on insurgents; you can only put pressure on a Government, and the Government you have to deal with is the Turkish Government. The House will fully agree that the manner in which the so-called negotiations and measures of reform have been conducted by the Russian and the Austrian Governments leaves much to be regretted.

With regard to the simile that has been used, I am reminded of the incident of a sick man who said to a visitor as he entered the sick room, "Did you meet the doctors in the hall? They have just gone." "Oh, yes," he said. "What was their opinion of my case?" inquired the invalid. "Well," replied the visitor, perhaps too candidly, "they cannot agree about you, but they say it will all be plain at the *post-mortem*." No doubt Turkey is pretty astute as to the attitude of Russia and Austria, and the Turks are not very likely to be highly influenced by Powers which are supposed to have that kind of interest in the provinces in question. As to the main essential point, the powers which ought to be placed in the Inspector-General who is to carry out the reforms, I think we all feel that it is now amply evident that what is needed is that he should have a large measure of independence of the Turkish Government and should be under the joint authority of the Governments interested, including that of Great Britain.

The noble Earl opposite said that Great Britain has a peculiar interest in this question. Of course we have permanent and immense interests in the whole matter, and we also have great responsibility. It is absolutely certain that those representing Turkey—I do not say always with the authority of Turkey—have committed, not only persecution, but intolerable outrages on women and children—outrages an account of the nature of which it would be impossible to read in any public assembly. The insurgents have not been guilty in the same degree.

These unspeakable crimes have been committed nominally under the *ægis* and auspices of the Turkish Government; and therefore I earnestly join in the hope that the noble Marquess, although he may not feel able to announce what particular steps he is recommending the Government to take, will be able to give us some assurance that the Government will not tolerate a continuance of these crimes but will insist on the reforms which have been indicated being carried out.

*The Lord BISHOP of ROCHESTER: My Lords, I desire to say a few words on this important question. I do not know whether the noble Lord who opened the debate will altogether welcome any support that might come to him from these Benches.

Lord NEWTON: Oh, certainly.

*The Lord BISHOP of ROCHESTER: The noble Lord referred to a natural ecclesiastical feeling. Well, my Lords, the word "ecclesiastical" is capable of a larger or a smaller denotation, and certainly if I or any other Bishop speaking here, represent an amount of ecclesiastical feeling in the narrower sense, I think it may be even more confidently asserted that he represents it in the largest sense possible.

Lord NEWTON: I beg the right rev. Prelate's pardon, but I did not use the word "ecclesiastical" in any offensive sense.

*The Lord BISHOP of ROCHESTER: I quite understand that. What I have chiefly in my mind is the condition of feeling in the country, and I am quite certain that, if those whom I directly represent feel acutely on the matter, those with whom I am not accustomed to act in many matters feel even more acutely—in other words that the Christian sentiment of the country has been deeply moved in this matter. Is there any fault in this? We feel, as Englishmen, sympathy immediately there is the least touch of injury to the honour or the interests of England. May we not as Christians feel as quickly for those who are linked to us in faith? But though it is true that we sympathise very specially with our fellow-Christians, our hearts go out to all sufferers, irrespective of religion or nationality. Yet I think that public feeling finds less expression than it would, from the very fact that the case is proved up to the hilt. It is pathetic when sufferings cease to move us only because they are so familiar and the arguments cease to bite only because we are so accustomed to their force. That is the case in this instance. But some people I know withhold their sympathy because the crimes of both sides are of a piece. What is the answer to that? The first that it is not true. It is among the debts which we owe to the noble Marquess that he has put this on record in his reply to the outrageous attempt of the Turkish Government to arrest our relief measures. The noble Marquess wrote—

> "I have no hesitation in saying that the ruin and destruction brought about by Turkish soldiers are greater than any resulting from the action of Bulgarian bands."

Secondly, if the bands have committed crimes, it is the unhappy people upon whom the sufferings and vengence fall. But I go further and I say that even if it is admitted that those who represent the revolutionary committees have done a great deal that was bad—and undoubtedly they have—still when we consider the history, and what the treatment of these provinces has been, is, and I am afraid looks as if for some time it will be, we must not judge them too severely. What I think people sometimes forget is that the dominant factor of the situation for many decades past has been the rule of a Power which our leading public men of all Parties have as it were taxed their vocabulary to characterise; and when we turn to the conduct of those who have suffered from having that Power over them what can we expect to find? Do we expect to find an advanced state of civilisation, of frankness, or of openness of behaviour? When people ask me to consider the behaviour of the Bulgarians it is that which I have in my mind.

A friend of mine told me yesterday that he did not think opinion was strongly moved because people said to themselves that these men, after all, were rebels, and rebels generally ought to be put down. I do not know whether many members of your Lordships' House will accept either the opinion or the authority if I recall what I remember hearing Mr. Gladstone say towards the end of his life. He said that whereas he had started by believing that in any case of collision between the rulers of a country and its subjects, the probabilities were nine to one that the rulers were right and the subjects wrong, he had ended by thinking that the case was exactly contrary. I do not think, however, that we need fall back on any generalisation of that kind, for it is absurd to talk about rebels when they have to serve under such a Government. What astonishes me is that any should judge the case without remembering that it is only one chapter more in a long and tragic history. In that history we have the same ghastly recurrences of cruelty, the same repetitions of diplomatic delays, the same suggested doubts on the part of, perhaps cynical, or, at least, critical opinion in our own country, and all the while the terrible undernote of both chronic and periodical suffering on the part of the population in these provinces. I wish we could have it brought before us in this House with the eloquence of some who have once sat upon its Benches, what that history is, and how it bears upon the case to-day. In my opinion it is idle to suppose that the troubles in the Balkan provinces can be removed except by practically neutralising the power of Turkey over the territory which she oppresses. I read a phrase used by the noble Earl the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in another place, that "what is required in the Turkish provinces is not political change so much as thorough administrative reorganisation." I do not want to quarrel with a phrase, and if the administrative reorganisation is to get the Turk out of the way altogether, and only save his face and pay him compliments, then I can accept the noble Earl's phrase; but if it means anything short of that, it would appear to me a going back to the old state of things which has deceived us so often.

None of us can seriously doubt that the honour and duty of England are deeply involved in the existing state of affairs. Noble Lords have shown with humour and with seriousness what must, I think, be plain to all men, about the will and power of the two Powers to which the matter has been left. On the one side it looks to the outsider like a long farce; but, on the other, we know it has been a long tragedy of the most ghastly kind. Whether the noble Marquess has the power—I should not doubt that he had the will—to terminate this by some action of a more reasonable, commonsense, and practical sort, of course we outside cannot tell. But possibly the present condition of things which makes the hands of Russia full in the Far East will make it palpably clear that nothing really is to be hoped from the prolongation of the action that has already been so futile, and I hope, therefore, that the noble Marquess, true to the best instincts of English feeling and the noblest parts of British tradition, and appealing to what is generous in the minds of the great Mediterranean Powers, may be able, even now, to do something to establish in those lands a real rule, impartial, ordered, and strong, and so to bring about the deliverance of these unhappy peoples.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I feel sure that there can be but one opinion in this House as to the value of the debate to which we have just had the privilege of listening; and although there are, no doubt, some occasions when Ministers would gladly be spared the trouble of stating a Government case, I certainly feel that upon this occasion the speeches which have been delivered will strengthen our hands and give us courage in the course which we have been endeavouring to pursue, and I think also place us in a better position to pursue it with success. My noble friend who spoke first gave your Lordships a very interesting review of the recent history of affairs in the Balkan Peninsula. The noble Lord, using an unofficial freedom which I am afraid I cannot venture to imitate, belaboured—I will not say indiscriminately—all the parties to these unhappy transactions. He complained of the dilatoriness of the two Powers, of the stupidity of the Turkish Government, of the provocative tactics of the insurgents, and the excesses of the Turkish troops. I think there was reason for most of the complaints which he made; and when I consider how he laid about him, I am all the more grateful, because he not only spared me from a share in the blows, but gave me a few kindly words of encouragement and support.

I venture to agree with the noble Earl as to the futility of endeavouring to determine exactly how the responsibility for these terrible events should be distributed. I agree with the right rev. Prelate in believing that, at any rate within the last few months, the balance has inclined heavily on the Turkish side. I fancy that my noble friend Lord Newton who, with the frankness that characterises him, does not conceal his leaning towards Turkey, must have welcomed the first Blue-book as bearing out the view which he has sometimes supported in this House; but when he came to peruse the terrible tale in the pages of the second Blue-book he must have felt that it was no longer possible to represent these occurrences as entirely due to the agitation and the machinations of what we speak of as the Bulgarian bands. The fact is that we are surrounded by a vicious circle. On the one hand you have chronic and grievous misgovernment, which provokes and leads to outrage and agitation, and on the other you have the fact that the prevalence of this agitation renders the application of reforms doubly difficult. The question we have to consider is, what can His Majesty's Government do to bring about some improvement in a state of things which to all of us has appeared for a long time past intolerable.

But, my Lords, while I share the fierce indignation which these events have provoked, I desire to say one or two words as to the amount of responsibility which attaches to this country. I do not think stress has been laid on the point this evening, but it is constantly said that an extra share of responsibility devolves upon this country for the condition of affairs in the Balkan Peninsula. We are constantly told that it is due to our action in particular that in 1878 the Macedonian provinces were handed back to the tender mercies of the Turkish Government; and we are represented as having washed our hands of Macedonia and remained indifferent to its fate. That is, I think, a libel upon our country. The fact is that the Treaty of Berlin, which certainly withdrew a considerable portion of the European dominions of Turkey altogether from the control of that Power, abounded in provisions of precaution for the welfare of those parts of the Turkish Empire which were still left under Turkish authority. In particular, the 23rd Clause provided for the institution of local commissions which were to elaborate statutes and regulations for the future government of those parts of the Turkish Empire. Other provisions had reference to Eastern Rumelia and the Asiatic provinces of Turkey. But I confine myself for the moment to Macedonia. It is the greatest mistake to suppose that the Government of this country allowed those provisions of the Treaty of Berlin to be set aside or neglected. The records of the Foreign Office show a continuous series of efforts to give effect and reality to them. Throughout 1878 and 1879 we were constantly pressing for the production of these organic statutes. Local commissions were appointed, which displayed a most portentous amount of industry. At one moment a draft was in existence containing no less than 900 sections. In the beginning of 1880 the report of the local commissions were received, and they were referred to the European Commission which, under the treaty, had been formed for the purpose of providing an organic statute for the province of Eastern Rumelia. The Commission examined the report, and recommended its partial adoption; and the British Government in which the late Lord Granville was Foreign Secretary issued a circular to the Powers pressing them to put the new statute into force as soon as possible. But the Powers were half-hearted; the Porte was characteristically reluctant; then came troubles in Greece, then troubles in Montenegro, and then the Egyptian question, and the organic statute quietly sunk out of sight in the quicksands of European diplomacy. The attempt to secure improved administration of the Asiatic provinces of Turkey had very much the same fate. But no effort was neglected, so far as the Government of this country was concerned. There are on record vigorous warnings from Lord

Granville, from Lord Rosebery, and later on from Lord Salisbury. But again there arose international complications and troubles, and nothing was done. I have dwelt upon this chapter of history because there are conclusions to be drawn from it which are worth noting. In the first place, I think it shows that this country, at any rate, spared no effort to induce the other Powers to give effect to the provisions of the Berlin Treaty; and in the next place I cannot help thinking that the humiliating failure of all these remonstrances and negotiations shows that the European Concert is not always a very effective piece of machinery for bringing about practical measures of reform. Count Goluchowski lately spoke strongly of the cumbrous inefficiency of the European Concert as an instrument of reform. And when my noble friends animadvert so severely upon the failure of the two Powers concerned in the dual scheme, I think they should remember that the only alternative was a further recourse to the cumbrous machinery of the European concert, the results of which have shown themselves so disappointing in the past.

Now, even if there had been no question of treaty obligations in this matter, I entirely agree with what was said by the right rev. Prelate to the effect that it is our duty as a great Christian Power to do what we can to bring about a solid amelioration of the condition of things in the Balkan Peninsula. We have been told that the scheme put forward by Austria-Hungary and Russia is unsatisfactory and disappointing. Let me point out to those who criticise that scheme that it is the easiest thing in the world to draw up on paper a scheme for the reform of the European provinces of Turkey; but it is when you come to put a scheme of that kind into execution that your troubles begin. If you have got a clean slate to start with, if you can first pull down, it is not so difficult afterwards to build up; but in this case the ground is occupied; you have to deal with the existing Government of the Porte and its notorious recalcitrancy; you have to consider the susceptibilities of the other Powers; and lastly, but not least, you have to take into account the rivalries and animosities, often of the most pitiless kind, of the different races by whom that part of the Turkish Empire is occupied. We were in this position. We were offered in the beginning of last year the scheme of the two Powers which, from their geographical position and their political interests, were most immediately concerned. What were we to do? It has sometimes been suggested that His Majesty's Government, believing as they did that the scheme fell short of what is required, should have taken a line of their own and acted for themselves. My Lords, I say with deep conviction that I cannot conceive of any course of action which would have been less likely to bring about a speedy relief to the suffering Macedonians. We knew exactly how the matter was regarded by the other Powers. Russia and Austria-Hungary were, of course, deeply committed to their own project. Germany had made it plain that she had no desire to take an active part in pressing that or any other scheme upon the Turkish Government. France had officially undertaken to support the two Powers; and Italy, though I believe cordially anxious, then as now, to co-operate with us in giving reality to those reforms, had also declared herself for the time being content to accept the joint scheme. We should have had to act absolutely by ourselves; and I fail to see how any action of ours could have had the effect of bringing about what we most desire—the prompt relief of the suffering population of Macedonia. Any such action would have had one effect which I think you will agree with me would have been deplorable. It would have shown to the Turkish Government that there was discord amongst the Great Powers. We have, at any rate, in supporting the scheme of the two Powers, and endeavouring to improve it, been able to show a solid front to the Turkish Government, not I think, without good results.

The noble Earl on the Back Bench criticised the Murzsteg scheme. I will not deal with his criticisms because I think most of them are criticisms which I have made myself and which are officially recorded in the Blue-book. But the scheme was the best we could get, and I humbly conceive it was our duty to give it all the encouragement we could and to make it as effectual as possible. The noble Earl expressed the hope that I should be able to tell your Lordships something of the progress which has been made in giving effect to the programme of the two Powers. I think something has been accomplished. In the first place, we may fairly say that the appearance of the Murzsteg scheme had one important result, I mean the disbanding of the large force of irregular troops which the Turkish Government had during the summer maintained in the Balkan Peninsula. It certainly seems to me, judging from these Papers, that the falling off in the number of outrages and excesses coincided with the disbandment of the Ilaveh battalions, of which a large number throughout the year had been in occupation of Macedonia. Then the noble Earl made rather light of the appointment of the two European assessors. We did not regard their appointment as by any means an ideal arrangement; we agreed to accept it as an alternative for the more thoroughgoing and far-reaching arrangement which was indicated in our despatch. We hear, however, that the assessors are at this moment actually engaged at work, and we hope that good results may come from their efforts. But the point on which, for my part, I am most inclined to rely is the reorganisation of the Macedonian gendarmerie. I place that measure in the front rank in point of importance, because if we can put the gendarmerie upon a satisfactory footing we shall at any rate have something concrete to which we can point, and something which is not merely a paper reform.

Progress has certainly been made with regard to the gendarmerie. The Italian General has taken up his duties, and at this moment a number of staff officers, one deputed by each of the Powers, are engaged in the preparation of a scheme for the reorganisation of the force. Their meetings have, we hear, passed off satisfactorily, and although I cannot announce to your Lordships the final shape which their proposals have taken I am able to say that they are about to put forward a scheme under which the gendarmerie will be divided into a certain number of battalions, each battalion to be officered by officers deputed by a European Power, and entrusted with the custody of a particular section of the country. That seems to me to be a practical and business-like arrangement which ought to work well. We have already selected a certain number of British officers, I think six or eight is the number which has been spoken of, and I hope that before we are many days older it may be possible to send them out, and to place them at once in a position to commence the discharge of their duties.

Lord NEWTON: Who will pay them?

*The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: They will be paid by the Turkish Government; but we propose that it should be arranged that they should not be liable to dismissal by the Turkish Government. I need not point out that the presence of a large number of European officers in Macedonia will be of the greatest value, not merely on account of the service which they will be able to render to the gendarmerie, but also because they will be there as trustworthy witnesses upon whom we shall be able to rely for some account of the manner in which events are passing in the country. I should also mention that the Turkish Government has assigned revenues, to the extent of £250,000, to provide a financial basis for putting the reorganised force on a proper footing. The noble Earl who spoke second suggested to me that the moment had come when we might brush aside the imperfect and inadequate proposals of the two Powers, and when we might put forward for acceptance more far-reaching proposals of our own. My Lords, we have from the first contemplated that it might become necessary for us to adopt this course; but I am bound to say that this particular moment seems to me to be ill-chosen for any such demonstration on our part. I hope I am not too sanguine, but I believe that in spite of all the delays that have taken place we never were nearer to the achievement of a certain amount of satisfactory progress than we are at this moment. If the gendarmerie can be reorganised, it is not too much to hope that the people of the Balkan Peninsula who are watching these events with so much anxiety may be reassured, and may be content to abstain from any action calculated to produce a fresh crisis at the beginning of the spring. I may be too sanguine, but I do earnestly hope that the experiment which is now being tried, and to which we are to some extent committed, will be given a fair trial. If it be, and if, after having received such a trial, fails to produce the results which we anticipate then I think noble Lords will be amply justified in reminding the Government of the pledges which they have given, and in calling upon them to put forward more drastic and more thorough measures of reform for these long-suffering provinces.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I do not like this very interesting debate to close without making some observations on the part of those with whom I usually sit. I think the House may be congratulated on the remarkable debate that has taken place. I believe that the debate has on the whole truly represented the almost unanimous feeling which exists in this country on this great question at the present moment. What the country requires is that every effort that this Government and every other Christian and civilised Government can make, should be made to put an end, once for all, to the gross and grave disturbances which have occurred in the Balkan Peninsula. The noble Lord who opened the debate argued, I think, that the condition of those provinces was so acute and so dangerous that a complete reform must be made there. I welcome that statement from the noble Lord, for I fancy that on previous occasions he did not press so hardly on Turkey as some of us have done. The noble Lord mentioned one of the reasons why I think such heavy blame rests on Turkey, and why, as long as Turkey holds her power without restraint in these districts, there will always be great danger to the liberty and happiness of the people.

The noble Lord said that when we consider the agents of Turkey we must, perhaps, make some excuse for her. That is one of the grave considerations connected with this subject. In reference to these agents of Turkey, who have brought about disastrous results, it must be remembered that Turkey has brought into the European Provinces Asiatics whose ways are barbarous to the extremest degree; and she has also brought wild tribes on the West of Macedonia, the Albanian regiments, who, I think, are very little better. This is one of the reasons why I think pressure ought to be brought to bear on the Government of Turkey. We had the pleasure of listening to an eloquent speech from the noble Earl who spoke second in the debate. He brought forward, in a most lucid way, all the arguments that could be adduced from the Blue-books and from other sources to show the grave state of affairs existing in Macedonia. Then we had a speech which, I think, everyone in this House heard with the greatest pleasure, and which I am sure will be re-echoed throughout the country—I refer to the speech of the right rev. Prelate. I am sure that in the eloquent language which he used the right rev. Prelate voiced the feelings of the whole of the Episcopal Bench. He spoke most nobly as to the duties of England in this matter, and I fully share his view. This country has a deep and heavy responsibility.

The noble Marquess in his speech—and there is very little that I wish to seriously criticise in that speech—made some reference to what he called the extra share of responsibility which people sometimes say attaches to the British Government in this matter. I must say I feel very strongly that we have an extra share of responsibility. The noble Marquess referred to the clauses in the Treaty of Berlin, and told us how Secretary of State after Secretary of State had urged that these provisions should be carried out, and the noble Marquess seemed to think that with the representations that have been made to get the provisions of that treaty carried out we have relieved ourselves of our share of responsibility. That, no doubt, is quite correct with regard to the Treaty of Berlin? but the noble Marquess did not refer to the heavy responsibility which rested on this country with regard to the revocation and withdrawal of the previous treaty that had all but been wrung from Turkey by the Russian Government—I mean the Treaty of San

Stefano. If that treaty had been carried out, would all these horrors and all this mismanagement have taken place? I think that in this respect alone we have a very heavy responsibility, and I venture to differ from the noble Marquess when he said we hardly had that extra share of responsibility which many people chose to put upon us.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: Not a greater share of responsibility than any other Power.

*EARL SPENCER: Well, I do not know. It has always been one of the boasts of our friends opposite that they had the principal share of responsibility in doing away practically with the San Stefano arrangement. The noble Lord referred to Austria and Russia as being in the position of residuary legatees, having no great interest in carrying forward the negotiations and in bringing them to an issue. Well, I hardly understand that. They may have been dilatory in carrying out their scheme of reform, but I cannot think, as Lord Newton seems to imply, that these two Powers, which are by their geographical position in so much greater contact with the disturbed provinces than any other Power, can have any interest whatever in prolonging the unfortunate state of difficulty and difference. I cannot help thinking that their wish would be to see peace and good government reigning in that part of the world. We all know that Russia, in consequence of the unfortunate events that are going on in the Far East, will have her hands very full, and that may make a considerable difference in the amount of pressure which she will be able to bring to bear on Turkey in this matter. I sincerely trust that in that event other Powers will step in and supply the necessary pressure, and that reforms in Macedonia will not suffer by what is going on elsewhere. I entirely associate myself with what the right rev. Prelate so well said in regard to many passages in the noble Marquess's despatches. I think the greatest possible praise must be given to the noble Marquess, and I feel I cannot use too strong words of praise for the very noble and dignified reproof which he gave to the Turkish Government when they appealed to him not to protect those who were going from this country to relieve the unfortunate people who are suffering in Macedonia, and I am quite sure the whole country will be grateful to him for the attitude and the line which he took up in this respect. The noble Marquess referred to the fact that the Austrian Foreign Minister had commented upon the cumbrous inefficiency of the European concert. We know what the noble Marquess the late Foreign Secretary said with regard to the European concert—that it was like a steam roller, very powerful, but very slow. I rather gathered that the noble Marquess was hoping to bring greater pressure to bear on the European concert. It would be interesting to know how he can bring that pressure to bear upon it. I remember how the European concert was outdone entirely by another method in the case of Crete. I am afraid that can hardly be done on this occasion. The European concert was unable to effect reforms which were required in Crete, but they were carried out efficiently by a distinguished friend of mine, a gallant naval officer who at that time was in command of our ships there. The late Lord Salisbury at that time gave very high praise to the efficacy of naval diplomacy. He praised Admiral Noel in that way. But I am afraid the noble Marquess will hardly get the assistance of the Navy in Macedonia. That distinguished and gallant officer is now in a very difficult place, for I rather think he commands, or is about to command, our Fleet in China. I was glad to hear from the noble Marquess a repetition of what he said some time ago with regard to a Christian Governor-General. But, unfortunately, on that occasion he gave the two Powers an alternative, and they took the lesser of the two, and instead of following the much wiser advice of the noble Marquess by pressing for the appointment of a Christian Governor-General who should act independently, they were content with two assessors.

I sincerely trust that the noble Marquess will be able to renew his representations as to the appointment of a Christian Governor-General to the two Powers, especially as they seem almost inclined now to follow his advice. I fear that without that being done there is little chance of the establishment of good government in the country. The noble Marquess attaches immense importance to the proper and efficient reorganisation of the gendarmerie; but I fear, from what we hear, that the appointment of the distinguished Italian general has been so recent that he will hardly have time, before the spring comes on, to have the force in working order. I sincerely trust, however, that the hopes of the noble Marquess may be realised, because the establishment of a thoroughly good gendarmerie would conduce more than anything else to a satisfactory settlement of the country. I noticed with satisfaction that the noble Marquess does not consider that the proposals made by the two Powers are adequate for what is required. All I can say is that I am quite sure the country will support him with vigour and enthusiasm if he presses forward with all the strength and influence of His Majesty's Government such changes as will make the reforms adequate.

LORD NEWTON: My Lords, I have no intention of detaining your Lordships, but I should like to remind my noble friend the Foreign Minister that he has not said whether he is going to lay any further Papers or not. With regard to the measures upon which the noble Marquess relies for the preservation of peace, I only desire to make one observation. It is this—and I think everyone present will agree with me—that these measures to be really effective ought to have been put in operation months ago by the Austrian and Russian Governments. As to the speech of my noble friend, I will only say I hope he will be justified in the somewhat optimistic view he takes of the future.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: We shall present further Papers, but I do not think immediately. When my noble friend put his notice down at the beginning of the session he had only one of the two Blue-books in his possession. The second Blue-book has been presented since his notice was on the Paper.

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

THE CASE OF MR. McCULLY.

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I rise to call the attention of His Majesty's Government to the gross treatment at Buenos Ayres of Mr. Edward McCully, chief officer of the British ship "Kambira," who, upon the suggestion of the British Consul at that port, was lodged in an Argentine gaol, where he existed for fifty-seven days without trial under the most degrading conditions; to ask whether it is a fact that, on the case being tried, it was at once dismissed by the Federal Judge on the ground of his having no jurisdiction; if so, whether His Majesty's Government have taken any steps regarding the Consul referred to; and whether they are prepared to compensate Mr. McCully for the serious injury and expense sustained by him owing to the extraordinary way in which he was dealt with by an official representing British interests abroad?

I think it highly necessary that I should draw your attention and that of His Majesty's Government to this very serious matter, and particularly so because it disturbs our confidence in the representatives of this country abroad in their dealings with those of our fellow-subjects who have the right of protection at their hands. In putting the case as briefly as possible, I may say that the chief officer named in my notice was charged at the British Consulate by certain members of his crew with certain acts of cruelty and ill-treatment. Under Sections 480, 481, and 483 of the Merchant Shipping Act, the British Consul had full powers to immediately call a naval Court consisting of not more than five and not less than three persons, with himself as President, in order to thoroughly investigate the charges. All the necessary witnesses could have been called immediately, and the Court would have the power to suspend or cancel the officer's certificate, to call upon him to forfeit the whole or any part of his wages, to pay the whole or a part of the costs of the Court out of his wages, or, under Section 689 of the same Act, the Consul could have inquired into the case upon oath. Then, if it so required, he could have despatched the offender, as soon as practicable, in safe custody to any British possession in which there is a

Court capable of taking cognizance of the offence, to be there proceeded against according to the law.

What, however, were the methods adopted by the British Consul at Buenos Ayres? Throwing aside his own responsibility and powers—for what cause I am at a loss to think, except that it was sheer laziness—he handed Mr. McCully over to the tender mercies of the Argentine police authorities. Not content with this arbitrary act, he despatched a note to these authorities to the effect that Mr. McCully had conducted himself in a brutal manner towards several of the crew, and he was sorry that he could not give a complete list of the other members of the crew who had been the victims of the mate's fury. He ended by asking the judge to pass the severest sentence against the said chief officer as a lesson to men who are accustomed to act in this way. Assuming for the moment that the chief officer in question was guilty of the charges, such a communication to foreign authorities cannot be too strongly condemned. The Consul gave the chief officer no opportunity of defending himself, and his action can only be characterised as an outrage on British justice. It is all the worse when perpetrated by a responsible official of our Government, who himself had full power to deal with the case.

What was the result of this Consul's extraordinary communication? The chief officer, Mr. McCully, was at first locked up without a bed, and for the first twenty-seven hours had nothing to eat, being ultimately sent to the city prison, and compelled to linger, under the vilest conditions, in close confinement for no fewer than fifty-seven days. The captain of the ship on which the cruelties were alleged to have been committed stated without hesitation that the whole thing was a conspiracy. The crew swore or made statements against the chief officer of cruelty committed on the passage and whilst in Canadian ports; these cruelties he never heard of until he was called before the Consul. It is a very fortunate fact that Mr. McCully had some friends in the port—members of the Merchant Service Guild—who, by means of subscriptions and in other ways, took the matter up. Otherwise the likelihood is that Mr. McCully would have been languishing in gaol even yet. Perhaps your Lordships may remember the case of the steamer "Greylands" which I brought to your notice, where two officers and five seamen were kept in gaol at the same port (Buenos Ayres) for nearly five months without trial.

Lord Muskerry.

I understand that the Merchant Service Guild have made very strong representations on this case of Mr. McCully to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and it is noteworthy that the *Buenos Ayres Herald,* and other papers in that quarter, printed in our own language, commented in no measured terms on the acts of so-called British representatives at the port. The Foreign Office, in reply to the Merchant Service Guild, bear out the fact that, as I have stated, a naval Court would have been competent to investigate the charges brought against Mr. McCully, and that it is the usual and most desirable course for a Consul to follow in summoning such a naval Court. The Foreign Office remarked that it was unfortunate that the charges did not come to the notice of the Consul until the necessary witnesses had disappeared. Surely in view of this fact his action was the more unjustifiable and injudicial. We have the right to expect our representatives to act with a better sense of justice and judgment than this. It seems that the Consul appears to have been anxious, as he states, to check the ill-treatment to which seamen on Nova Scotian vessels are sometimes subjected. I am glad to hear that the Merchant Service Guild have protested against any such assumption, which they say is based on what is practically ancient history, and for which there is no actual foundation at the present time. At the same time I very strongly contend that ill-treatment or no ill-treatment, the case of Mr. McCully has been handled in a shocking manner. The Guild, I believe, are informed that both the Board of Trade and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs deprecate the practice of handing over a British subject to be dealt with by local authorities for offences alleged to have been committed on board a British vessel, when the recognised machinery for dealing with the case under British law can possibly be employed. They are also of opinion that the Consul should not have asked that Mr. McCully should be punished with the greatest severity which the law allows, inasmuch as by so doing he seemed to prejudice the case and to lay himself open to a suspicion of animus against the accused. I do not know whether your Lordships would consider "suspicion" quite the right term. I should call it an intemperate and wilfully malicious statement.

I hope that I have indicated to your Lordships how the interests of British ships are attended to by our representatives at Buenos Ayres, and I trust that you will agree with me that their action merits direct condemnation and censure at the hands of His Majesty's Government. There remains the fact that, apart from personal suffering and degradation, the chief officer of the ship "Kambira" has been subjected to very great expense, and the least that His Majesty's Government can do is to offer some compensation as a solatium. I have read in one of our leading shipping Dailies of three Danish seamen, against whom an unsubstantiated charge of mutiny and setting fire to a British barque on the high seas was preferred at Dover, who received an indemnity from the Treasury, together with the wages alleged to have been withheld from them by the British Consul who sent them to England. If it is the case that His Majesty's Government are able to act in this way towards foreign seamen in our ships, there is no possible excuse for not granting one of our own subjects, a chief officer of a British ship, practical consideration of a similar nature. The last instance of a British officer being badly treated was in Japan, and the noble Marquess very kindly interested himself in the matter. The result was that the judge and officials concerned were punished and the noble Marquess very kindly put forward a suggestion that the Japanese Government should pay a certain sum by way of compensation. I think the sum they finally offered was 5s. 6d. I hope His Majesty's Government will be prepared to grant a more substantial sum than that to Mr. McCully for the serious injury and expense sustained by him owing to the extraordinary way in which he has been dealt with by an official representing British interests abroad.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I have made inquiries into this case and have been informed that on the arrival of the ship referred to the crew made a number of complaints to the British Consul, Mr. Ross, of the manner in which they had been ill-treated by Mr. McCully, the chief officer. The complaints, which were of a serious kind, referred to various acts of cruelty, and in particular to a case in which Mr. McCully was alleged to have knocked down an able seaman and kicked four of his teeth out while the man was lying down. The same seaman was said to have had three of his fingers injured by a blow from a capstan bar. There were other complaints. These had reference partly to occurrences which took place during the voyage, and partly to occurrences which took place in port. I believe I am right in saying that the Argentine Courts are competent to deal with cases of this kind when they occur within an Argentine port. But be that as it may, I agree with the noble Lord that the whole of these cases, whether they occurred in port or during the voyage, ought properly to have been referred to a naval Court. Mr. Ross, however, who evidently took a very serious view of these complaints, acting under a misapprehension, referred the case to the local Courts. The result was that Mr. McCully was imprisoned. The Courts were in vacation at the time and bail was refused by the local authorities. Mr. Ross did all he could to hasten the trial, and when it took place the Court, for reasons of which I am not aware, but which the noble Lord perhaps knows, decided that the offences were outside its jurisdiction, possibly because the particular offences specified took place during the voyage and not in port. Our view is that Mr. Ross, whose record in the Consular Service is a highly creditable one—he has the honour of being a Companion of the Order of the Bath, awarded to him in recognition of Consular Service—committed an error of judgment in sending the case to the local Court; and no doubt it would have been much better if he had not expressed a strong opinion, as he appears to have done, in regard to the culpability of an accused person. Our view has been intimated to Mr. Ross, who, I have no doubt, will have taken the reproof—for it is a reproof—to heart. I am advised that the case is not one for which any claim for compensation could be admitted by His Majesty's Government.

House adjourned, at Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 15*th February*, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—London, Camberwell, and Dulwich Tramways Bill. North-Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill; Southend-on-Sea Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

SUBSTITUTED BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in respect of the following Bills introduced pursuant to the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and which the Chairman of Ways and Means had directed to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with, viz.: — Clyde Valley Electrical Power [Lords]; Lothians Electric Power [Lords]; Young and Bell's Patents [Lords].

Bishop's Stortford and District Gas Bill; Blyth and Cowpen Gas Bill; Corbridge Gas Bill; Gomersal Gas Bill; Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill; Norwich Water Bill; Southend Water Bill; South Shields Gas Bill; South-Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Sutton Gas Bill; Whitby Gas Bill. Read a second time and committed.

Cheshire Electricity and Power Gas. Ordered, That Standing Orders 204 and 235 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read a second time.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Bill accordingly read a second time, and committed.

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Plymouth and North Devon Direct Railway (Abandonment) Bill. Order [4th February], that the Plymouth and North Devon Direct Railway (Abandonment) Bill be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn. — (*Mr. Caldwell.*)

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION ACT, 1902.

Petition from Fife and Angus, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Petition of the Male Electors' League for Women's Suffrage, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LAL, JEWEN.

Petition of Jewen Lal, for inquiry into his case; to lie upon the Table.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Musselburgh; Dartmouth; Sheffield, Penmaenmawr; Cilfynydd; Titchfield; Fareham; Batley; Margate; Throckley; Glasgow; South Manchester; New Quay (three); Welch Row; North Camberwell; North West Gloucestershire; Fishguard; Forfar; Dumfries and Kirkcudbright; Coupar Angus; Burton; Northampton; and East Greenwich; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COMMONS (INCLOSURE AWARDS).

Return [presented 9th February] to be printed. [No. 50.]

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of November, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SEA AND COAST FISHERIES FUND (IRELAND) (NON-CONGESTED DISTRICTS).

Account presented, for the year ended 31st December, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL.

Copy presented, of further correspondence regarding the Transvaal Labour Question [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GREEK LOAN.

Account presented, up to 31st December, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table. and to be printed. [No. 51.]

NAVY (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT).

Copy presented, of the Appropriation Account of the Navy for 1902–3, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon, and upon the Store Accounts of the Navy [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 52.]

ARMY (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT).

Copy presented, of the Appropriation Account for 1902–3, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon, and upon the Store Accounts of the Army [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 53.]

SUPERANNUATION.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 30th January, 1904, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the office of Inspector-General in Bankruptcy, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are required [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS' FOUNDATION.

Accounts presented, for the year ended 31st March, 1903, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 54.]

CHINA (No. 2, 1904).

Copy presented, of Correspondence respecting the Russian occupation of Manchuria and Newchwang [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 2, 1904).

Copy presented, of Convention respecting Payment of Light and Harbour Dues by Vessels of the United States in Zanzibar. Signed at Washington, 5th June, 1903. Ratifications exchanged at Washington, 24th December, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No. 3121 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Friendly Societies, Workmen's Compensation Schemes, Industrial and Provident Societies, and Trades Unions.—Reports of the Chief Registrar for the year ending 31st December, 1903 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 55.]

AMERICAN MAIL SERVICE.

Return ordered, "showing the number of days, hours, and minutes occupied in the transit of the Royal Mails, both outward and inward, carried during the year 1903 by steamships between Queenstown and New York, between Southampton and New York, and also between New York and Plymouth. The Return to specify the names of the steamers, and to indicate by asterisk or otherwise those not carrying Mails under contract."—(*Sir John Leng.*)

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (HALF-YEARLY STATEMENTS).

Copy ordered, "of Statement of the number of Paupers relieved on the 1st day of January, 1904, and similar Statement for the 1st day of July, 1904 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 109, of session 1903)."—(*Mr. Grant Lawson.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Sights of Guns on H.M.S. "Venerable" and "Ramillies."

MR. HARMSWORTH (Caithness-shire): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if his attention has been drawn to the fact that a shot fired from one of the 12-inch guns of H.M.S. "Venerable," during recent practice firing in the Mediterranean, passed between the funnels of H.M.S. "Gladiator;" and, if so, will he state whether this was caused by defective sights on the gun in question.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) No report to this effect has been received. If such an incident did occur it was certainly not due to the sights.

Mr. HARMSWORTH: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state whether the sighting of the turret guns of the "Ramillies" has been found to be defective; and, if so, what steps have been taken to remedy the defects.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The "Ramillies" returned from the Mediterranean and paid off in the autumn. She is now undergoing refit and having her upper deck guns casemated. The sights of the turret guns will be brought up to date as far as the nature of the mounting will allow.

Admiralty Shipbuilding Programme.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will explain why, in view of the statement of the late Secretary to the Admiralty upon the 23rd June, 1903, that the battleships of the 1903–4 programme would be laid down at an early date and be built by contract, the said ships were not laid down before January, 1904, and are being built in the Government dockyards; and whether the Admiralty adhere to the intention they expressed in August, 1903, of laying down three battleships in April next.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman*). The hon. Member will find the matter referred to in his Question fully dealt with in the Memorandum of the First Lord accompanying the Estimates, which will very shortly be laid upon the Table; and I suggest the hon. Member should kindly defer any Question he may have to ask till after he has read that statement.

Parliamentary Inquiries into Depression in Agriculture.

MR. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk, Mid.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state how many Parliamentary inquiries were held on the depression in agriculture last century, before the repeal of the Corn Laws, while protective tariffs existed, and the price of corn when these inquiries into depression were made; and describe the nature of the tariffs which existed.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) Parliamentary Committees on agricultural distress sat in the years 1820, 1821 and 1822, 1833, and 1836. Full particulars as to the prices of corn in these years, and as to the tariffs in force, are contained in the Return "Customs Tariffs of the United Kingdom from 1800 to 1897" [C. 8706 of 1897]. See pages 243, 244, 247, and 255.

Chiefs Clerks to Surveyors of Taxes.

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will say whether it is intended to comply with the recommendation of the surveyors of taxes for the establishment of a class of chief clerks in their offices.

(*Auswered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) No recommendation to the effect described in the Question has been received by the Board of Inland Revenue.

Alleged Exemption of Irish Roman Catholic Clergy from Income Tax.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will explain why the Roman Catholic clergy in Ireland are exempted from the payment of income-tax.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The hon. Member appears to be under some misapprehension. The Roman Catholic clergy in Ireland have no special exemption from income-tax.

Annual Saving in Irish Administration.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state the amount of the annual saving effected in the Irish administration; and whether he proposes to keep an account of the savings as well as the expenditure, so that the money due to Ireland shall not be lost sight of.

(Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.) As the Estimates for Irish Services are not yet completely closed, it is impossible to say at present what reduction will be shown in the estimated expenditure in 1904–5. The Annual Financial Relations Returns afford a comparative record of the cost of Irish Services in successive years.

Inspection of Boarded-out Pauper Children in Scotland.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if, in view of the fact that boarded-out pauper children in Scotland are not inspected systematically by the general superintendents of poor under the Local Government Board, he will consider the expediency of having the children periodically inspected, preferably by lady inspectors under the Local Government Board, as in England and in Ireland.

(Answered by Mr. Graham Murray.) I am informed by the Local Government Board for Scotland that complaints in regard to children boarded out are of extremely rare occurrence. The subject has been before the Departmental Committee on Medical Relief in Scotland, and when the Report of that Committee is issued the Board will consider whether any action on the lines indicated is necessary or advisable.

Plans of the House of Commons

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE: To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if copies of the plans of the House, similar to those exhibited in the Tea Room, can be obtained by Members by payment or otherwise.

(Answered by Lord Balcarres.) These plans are prepared for official purposes and the First Commissioner is not prepared to distribute or sell them.

Sanitary Inspectors' Certificates.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state the number of persons seeking certificates of competency as sanitary inspectors who have been examined in each year by the Board of Examinations constituted by the Local Government Board under Section 108 of The Public Health (London) Act, 1891, and the number to whom certificates of competency have been granted in each year.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) I am informed that the numbers are as follows:—

Year.	Number of Applicants for Certificates.	Number of Certificates granted.
1899 - -	18	16
1900 - -	21	12
1901 - -	27	24
1902 - -	70	57
1903 - -	69	46

Officers in Indian Native Regiments—Rank other than Military.

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs): To ask the Secretary of State for India if officers in the Indian Army serving in Native regiments hold any rank except that granted by the Sovereign, and notified in the Military Gazette; and, if so, who confers this rank, and under what authority.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.) The answer is in the negative.

Public Libraries in Ireland.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many rural district councils in Ireland have availed themselves of the Public Libraries Act of 1902, and will he give their names.

(Answered by Mr. Wyndham.) This information will be procured from the local authorities and communicated to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Certificates for Trained Nurses in Ireland.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will give the names of the institutions in Ireland considered competent by the Local Government Board to give certificates for trained nurses within the meaning of the first portion of the Nursing Order; the names of the institutions in Ireland considered competent to give certificates for qualified nurses within the meaning of the second portion of said Order; and the position of nurses (who have been in the service of boards of guardians previous to the said Orders and whose service had been satisfactory) as to promotion to other offices, increase in salaries, or appointment to posts in other unions.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) There is no official record kept of institutions fulfilling the requirements of Articles 2 (a) and 2 (b) of the Order in question. The claims of a particular hospital or institution are only considered as the necessity arises in connection with the registration of a nurse or upon the application of the authorities of the hospital. Hence there may be and doubtless are hospitals which would be held by the Board to be competent to certify nurses as trained or qualified should the occasion for making inquiry arise. Nurses whose employment in union hospitals had been sanctioned by the Board prior to the issue of the Order have not been disturbed in office; their rights have been carefully preserved to them. In no case has promotion or increase of salary been refused to any such nurse on the ground that she did not possess the qualifications prescribed by the Order.

Building of Technical Schools in Ireland.

Mr. FFRENCH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Agricultural and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act provides no funds for building purposes; and whether, in view of the danger of technical instruction coming to a standstill, or the local bodies ceasing to provide it, he will introduce a Bill providing funds for the building and equipping of technical schools in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I discussed this matter with the deputation that waited on me in Dublin on the 11th January, and have no further statement to make at present.

Collection of County Rates in Ireland.

Mr. FFRENCH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Wexford County Council passed a resolution requesting the Irish Local Government Board to alter the dates for closing the collection of county rates from the 31st March and 30th September to 1st May and 1st November, and that the Local Government Board refused to do so owing to the existing state of the law; and if so, whether, for the convenience of both ratepayers and collectors, he would undertake to bring about the proposed alteration either by legislation or otherwise.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The financial half-years are fixed by the Local Government Act, 1898, and the Orders made thereunder, and the Board has no power to vary these dates. The present arrangements involve no hardship on the ratepayers, and the collection of the rates has been characterised by remarkable punctuality. It is not proposed to introduce legislation with the object suggested in the Question.

Irish Land Act.

Mr. FFRENCH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will consider the advisability of inserting a clause in the Bill which he proposes to introduce to amend the Irish Land Act, 1903, bringing tenants of agricultural farms, holding under grants in perpetuity (not being grants under the provisions of the Renewable Leasehold Conversion Act) dated subsequent to the 1st January, 1861, within the scope of the Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The classes of tenants described in the Question, if in occupation of their holdings, are within the scope of the Land Purchase Acts. I am not aware that any amendment of the law in this respect is required.

Belfast Revaluation.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Commissioner of Valuation in Ireland undertook to hear the views of appellants against the Belfast revaluation in person before publishing his revised appeal list; that he invited some of the public bodies to appoint representatives to meet him, and interviewed some classes of Belfast merchants and also delegates from a ratepayers' committee; and, if so, will he explain why the Commissioner did not hear the Belfast publicans, whose valuations have been increased from £27,000 to £63,000.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Commissioner undertook to arrange interviews with the leading mercantile and other public bodies, as well as with individuals whose valuations were seriously affected by the revaluation. In September, 1901, he met a deputation of the Belfast licensed vintners, and in November, 1903, a leading member of that body, who put forward very clearly the views of the licensed vintners.

Indian Officers.

COLONEL DENNY: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether Paragraph 5 of the Royal Warrant of the 17th January, 1861, which provides that officers of the staff corps holding military appointments will take military command according to their Army rank, is still applicable to officers of the Indian Army.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The answer is in the affirmative.

COLONEL DENNY: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether Section 71 of the Army Act, which prohibits a combatant officer being subjected to the command of another of inferior rank, is applicable to officers of the Indian Army serving with Native regiments.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The answer is in the affirmative.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Military Camp in Roxburghshire.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland what is the state of the negotiations with regard to the purchase of the estate of Stobs, Roxburghshire, and adjoining land for the purposes of a military camp and military training; has a purchase been arranged or is it to be abandoned; are any arrangements being made for leasing property; and what is the extent of the lands which are the subject of transaction.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The Stobs Estate, 3,615 acres in extent, has been purchased. As regards the purchase of certain adjoining lands, the negotiations now proceeding have not reached a stage at which any disclosure in regard to their nature or the extent of the land concerned would be expedient. I regret, there ore, that I am not in a position to give the hon. and learned Member the information which he desires to obtain. I may add that at present no arrangements are being made for leasing any property in this neighbourhood.

The Irish Militia.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the Official Minutes of Lord Wolseley, dated 3rd November, 1897, contained in the Appendices to the Report Volume of the War Commission, p. 247, in which he stated that the War Office could not afford to explain in Parliament or make otherwise public, the fact that Irish Militia are brought to England to draw the teeth of possible rebellion; and whether, having regard to the different reasons already given by the War Office authorities relative to the transference of Irish Militia to this country, he has any, and, if so, what, explanation of Lord Wolseley's Minute.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I understand that the opinion expressed by Lord Wolseley was a personal one, and I have no knowledge of the reasons which led him to entertain the view he expressed in 1897. I have no reason to believe that Irish soldiers will prove traitors to their King or false to their military oath. The admirable and faithful performance of their duty by Irishmen in the service of the Crown adds to the improbability of any such action. As a matter of fact, the great majority of the Irish Militia perform their training in Ireland.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman, in order to encourage enlistment, have this Memorandum of Lord Wolseley's placarded at every recruiting station in Ireland?

[No answer was returned.]

82nd Battery R.F.A.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that the 82nd Battery R.F.A., who have been in South Africa four years, are still under canvas, and that the War Office propose to send the families of the men to South Africa while there are no quarters in which to house them, he will consider the advisability of putting these men in barracks by bringing home some one of the other units who are on the list for service in India shortly.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Every effort is being made to find suitable accommodation for the families of the troops which will be retained in South Africa, and the General Officer Commanding reports that the families can be accommodated in Indian pattern tents, which are specially suited for this purpose. I am afraid that the suggestion of the hon. Member is impracticable, as there are no barracks at home available for the units alluded to. I may add that in the case of this battery only two families have elected to go out.

The Imperial Yeomanry.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that according to the Imperial Yeomanry Training Return for 1903 just published, it appears that out of an establishment of 34,594 no fewer than 8,293 are wanting to complete, that 2,593 were absent from training, and that out of a total of 22,610 horses, 10,667 were hired, he will state what steps he proposes to take in order to place this force upon a more satisfactory footing.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: When the maximum of about 35,000 was fixed in 1901, the enrolled numbers stood at about 10,000 and those at training in the previous year amounted to 8,657. Since that time the numbers enrolled have risen to 27,054 on 1st January last, and the number at training in 1903 amounted to 23,779. These figures show very satisfactory progress. As regards the horses, without incurring considerable extravagance, it has been found impracticable to avoid hiring.

CAPTAIN NORTON: Am I to understand that although this is still a paper force, it is less a paper force than it was?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The hon. Member must understand nothing of the kind. A high establishment has been fixed, and a greater approximation to it has been attained every year. The recruiting for the Yeomanry has been most satisfactory.

Irish Tailors and Officers' Uniforms.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the fact that the adjutants of the Connaught Rangers, the Royal Irish Regiment, the Engineers, and the adjutants of other regiments stationed in Ireland are recommending young officers on joining these regiments to send for their outfits to certain English houses, and that in consequence orders placed by officers in Ireland have been countermanded; and whether in view of the loss to Irish firms by this conduct, he will take such steps as will put a stop to such practices by the adjutants or other officers in Ireland.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: A particular instance occurred in 1903 in which a Commanding Officer gave orders to a young officer to obtain his uniform from selected firms and instructions have been sent forbidding any such action. I am not, however, aware that such action is the practice, and I shall be glad if the hon. Member would draw my attention to any further cases which have come within his knowledge.

MR. NANNETTI: Has not a special order been issued by the Commander-in-Chief to adjutants in Ireland making this recommendation?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am not aware of it.

Mr. NANNETTI: I will send the hon. Gentleman some information on the subject.

Military Courts-Martial.

Mr. H. D. GREENE (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the number of Court-martial proceedings which in the year 1903 were submitted to the Judge Advocate General's Department in London; in how many cases findings were quashed; in how many cases in which soldiers were sentenced the punishment or part of it had been served before the findings were quashed, or before a remission of the whole or part of the sentence; and whether any, and what, steps have been taken to check the increase of illegalities of Courts-martial.

*Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER: During 1903 the proceedings of 11,232 Courts-martial were received in the Judge Advocate General's Office, and in 72 cases the proceedings were wholly quashed. In all cases in which a sentence of imprisonment had been confirmed and then ultimately quashed by the Judge Advocate General, a portion, at least, of the sentence had necessarily been served. As regards the last part of the Question, a circular letter has been recently issued to General Officers Commanding, with the object of preventing the cases of illegality in future.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Having regard to the fact that the Judge Advocate General is no longer a Minister responsible to this House——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! Notice must be given of the Question.

Indian State Railway Contracts.

Sir CHARLES McLAREN (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will for the future adopt the system recently put in force by the London County Council in settling contracts for rails and railway material, by giving preference in all cases in which there is no wide divergence in price, to the tenders of English makers over those of foreign makers; and whether he will allow English firms the opportunity of revising their tenders in cases where foreign firms tender at lower prices.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): The practice described in the Question is that which is now in force in respect of stores for State railways in India. In cases where there is no material difference in price and where in other respects the tenders are equally satisfactory or nearly so, a preference will unquestionably be given to a British tender. Where there is a wide difference in price and the quality of supply is reckoned identical, it is impossible, in justice to the Indian taxpayer, to ignore the lower tender. Large contracts for steel and other goods are executed for the Indian Government by Sheffield firms, and I doubt whether any distress in Sheffield can be attributed, as the hon. Member suggests, to the diversion to foreign firms of Indian Government orders in a very limited number of instances. The hon. Member, no doubt, is careful to distinguish between the action of Government, which affects only the State lines, and that of the Indian railway companies, in respect of the purchase of stores.

Sir CHARLES McLAREN: Can the right hon. Gentleman answer the latter part of the Question.

Mr. BRODRICK: It would be contrary to the principle on which contracts are made to allow an opportunity of revising the tenders.

In reply to a further Question by Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S. W.), Mr. Brodrick said the question of the dates of delivery was always carefully considered.

German Contracts for Indian Railways.

Sir CHARLES McLAREN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in the case of the orders for tyres and axles recently given by the Indian railways to German makers, the specification as to analysis and breaking tests on which the German makers tendered was identical with that on which the English makers tendered;

whether inspectors on behalf of the Indian railways were attached to the German works during the execution of the contracts; whether any, and if any, what tests were imposed on the tyres and axles when delivered; and whether he will in future, in cases where an order is given to a foreign firm, cause the lowest price tendered by an English firm together with the price taken by the foreign firm, to be published here.

MR. BRODRICK: In the case of the order for wheels and axles recently given by the Secretary of State in Council to German manufacturers, to which I presume the hon. Member refers, the specification as to analysis and breaking tests was identical with that on which the English makers tendered. Inspectors on behalf of the Secretary of State are attached to the German works during the execution of this contract. A copy of the specification showing the tests can be handed to the hon. Member if he so desires. I do not propose to depart from the established practice of declining to divulge the prices at which German, or any other firms, have tendered.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state the number and value of contracts for railway plant placed by Indian railways with foreign makers during the last five years, and what percentage of these contracts were secured by German firms.

MR. BRODRICK: The contracts entered into with foreign firms by the Secretary of State in Council in respect of material for Indian State railways during the last five years are eight in number, their total value is £135,567; and 25 per cent. of these contracts were secured by German firms. As regards contracts made by Indian railway companies, I am unable to give the information asked for. I may add that the total orders for material given during this period amounted to £4, 200,000. The percentage, therefore, of orders given to foreign firms was 3½ of the whole.

Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, as requested in his telegram of the 16th January last, express provisions have been introduced into the Transvaal Ordinance for the treatment and care of Chinese labourers on voyage out and home; and whether the transport will be confined to British vessels and the landing to British ports.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): No express provision has been introduced, but I have informed Lord Milner that adequate provision will have to be made by regulation. The point raised will be fully considered. At present it is contemplated, as appears from Lord Milner's statement in the Blue-book, to make use of Durban as the port of landing.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the persons specified in Section 8 of the draft Transvaal Labour Importation Ordinance, whose duty it will be to explain to Chinese labourers the terms of their contracts, will be persons selected and employed by the British Government.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am in communication with Lord Milner as to the details of the arrangements under Section 8, but His Majesty's Government undertake that the terms of the contract will be explained to the labourers before their departure by some person appointed by and responsible to the Government.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies for what reason the definition in the first draft of the Transvaal Labour Importation Ordinance of the premises to which Chinese labourers are to be confined, so as to include a circle of one mile round the place where they are working, has been struck out; and what meaning is to be attached to the term premises in Sections 18, 19, and 20 of the amended draft of the Ordinance.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I am informed by Lord Milner that the definition of the term premises in the first draft was omitted, as, under it, owing to the position of certain mines in Johannesburg, the labourers would have uncontrolled access to the most populous portions of the city, which was deemed undesirable. The matter will be settled by regulation.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Transvaal Government has made any examination of the signatures to the petition in favour of Chinese labour; if so, how many of these signatures were found to be genuine, and of these how many were duplicates.

*MR. LYTTELTON: Lord Milner reported by telegram on 28th January that the petition bearing 47,000 signatures of males only over sixteen years of age, which has been presented to the Council was collected with care and is entitled to as much consideration as such a method of ascertaining popular opinion ever can be. I have no further information.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: Are we to understand that the Government have made no examination of the signatures?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have no further information to give.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): Is it not the fact that a considerable number of white miners have been dismissed because they would not sign the petition.

*MR. LYTTELTON: No such information has reached me.

DR. MACNAMARA: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire?

[No answer was returned.]

DR. MACNAMARA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will consider the desirableness of deferring the debate on the proposed Ordinance for the introduction of indentured Asiatic labour into the Transvaal Colony, until the House is in possession of the whole correspondence between the Colonial Office and the High Commissioner respecting the changes which have been made in the text of the proposed Ordinance.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have to-day received a telegram from Lord Milner confirming my belief that no further changes have been made in the Ordinance in addition to those published in Cd. 1898. I do not propose to defer the debate.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I understand that the right hon. Gentleman has no further information from Lord Milner in regard to these Amendments that he can lay on the Table. Can he not put the House in possession of Lord Milner's reasons for the very drastic changes which have been made in the Ordinance during its passage through the Legislative Council?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have no information or Papers to produce on the subject.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will state by whom is the person mentioned in Section 8 of the Ordinance to be appointed, and is he to be resident in China or South Africa; and is the unwitnessed certificate which he presents to the importer in South Africa to be the sole guarantee the Government will have that the labourer is made fully aware of the terms of the contract.

*MR. LYTTELTON: There is to be a protector of the Chinese in the Transvaal, and a representative of the Government will be in China to see that the conditions of the contract are fully explained to the Chinese labourers there and that they are fully understood by them.

MR. BUCHANAN: Is this official, who is to explain to the Chinese the terms of their contract, to be resident in South Africa or in China?

*MR. LYTTELTON: The Ordinance does not secure that there shall be an official in China. The objection which I have endeavoured to meet by the pledge I have given, is that a Chinaman might arrive at Durban and find out there for the first time from the explanation given to him by the official the true nature of the contract; so I have taken measures, which I have indicated, to secure that the contract shall be understood before he leaves China.

Mr. **WILLIAM REDMOND** (Clare, E.): As a simple and downright matter of fact, will these Chinamen not be treated as slaves?

[No answer was returned.]

Recruitment of Labour in China.

Mr. **BUCHANAN**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has now received a reply to his communication to Lord Milner as to the method of the proposed recruitment of labour in China, by whom it is to be carried on, and what security there is to be that labourers before they leave China will be fully informed of the terms and restrictions of their contract.

*Mr. **LYTTELTON**: I have not yet received a reply to my inquiries.

Mr. **BUCHANAN**: Shall we get the information before the debate is commenced?

[No answer was returned.]

Conveyance of Labour to the Transvaal.

Mr. **EDMUND ROBERTSON** (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether provision will be made in the regulations relating to the importation of labourers into the Transvaal that the labourers shall be conveyed in British ships so as to secure their proper treatment during the voyage.

*Mr. **LYTTELTON**: The conveyance of the labourers in British ships is a matter which will be carefully considered, but in any case the proper treatment of the labourers during the voyage is a question the importance of which I fully recognise, and every precaution will be taken to secure such treatment.

British Columbian Labour Legislation.

Mr. **EDMUND ROBERTSON**: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in the year 1902, the Legislature of British Columbia passed an Act restricting immigration; whether the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs protested against it, in so far as it applied to Japanese subjects; whether the Act was in consequence disallowed by the Governor-General, with the sanction of the Imperial Government; whether an Act to the same effect was passed in 1903, and again disallowed; whether a Bill in similar terms has again been introduced; whether, if it becomes an Act, His Majesty's Government will again sanction its disallowance; and whether any correspondence on the subject can be laid upon the Table.

*Mr. **LYTTELTON**: The answer to the first three sections of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. I have no information as to either the disallowance of the Act of 1903 or as to the re-introduction of a similar Bill, and I am not prepared to pledge myself in advance as to the course I might think it desirable to take in such circumstances. There has been no recent correspondence on the subject, but there is no objection to laying such Papers as there are, if the House desires it.

Convict Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

Mr. **WHITLEY** (Halifax): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that at a meeting of the Chamber of Mines, held in Johannesburg on 19th November last, a letter was read from the Transvaal Government offering 1,000 more native convicts for the mines; and, if so, will he state whether this offer was accepted, what is the total number of convicts so employed, what is the nature of the offences for which they have been convicted, and on what terms are they supplied to the mines.

*Mr. **LYTTELTON**: Lord Milner informs me that he does not know of any special offer by the Government of 1,000 men to the Chamber of Mines in November. Since 1901 a certain number of convicts have been employed on the Transvaal mines, as has been the practice for many years at Kimberley, where an average of 1,200 convicts are permanently employed on mines. At present 850 convicts are so employed on the Rand. The Government agreement with mining companies stipulates that they shall only be employed on surface work, such as roads, dams, and earthworks, and shall not be employed on any work hazardous to life or limb, such as machinery, nor go below the surface of the ground. The mining companies pay the Government 1s. 6d. a day, and provide quarters and water; there is a special visiting magistrate reporting direct to the Attorney-General. The Director of Prisons reports they are excellently housed, they receive the same food as in all the big prisons, and have the same working hours—that is, one hour less than under Cape Colony regulations.

Mr. WHITLEY: What is the nature of the offences for which these natives have been convicted? How does it come that there are so many native convicts?

*Mr. LYTTELTON: I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Gentleman information, within a reasonable space of time, which would indicate the general nature of the offences committed.

Mr. WHITLEY: I want to know whether these are natives convicted for serious offences, or whether they have been convicted, for instance, for walking on the sidewalk instead of the middle of the road?

Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): Is there any other portion of the King's dominions in which convicts are let out for hire?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Notice should be given of that Question.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: Are all the native convicts at Johannesburg sent to work in the mines and none left in the prisons?

[No answer was returned.]

Education in the Transvaal.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been directed to the cost of administration in the Education Department in the Transvaal, which amounts to 12*s*. 6*d*. per child, as compared with 5*s*. per child in the Orange Colony, and 10*d*. in Cape Colony; and, if so, will he state what explanation the Colonial Office has for this expenditure, and what remedy does it propose for its reduction to a basis proportionate with the expenditure of the Educational Departments in the Orange Colony and Cape Colony.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: I am not aware on what the figures given in the Question are based and they do not appear to be correct.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman telegraph for information?

*Mr. LYTTELTON: Yes, Sir.

Korea.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in view of the fact that the British and American mining concessions in Korea are situated north of the 39th parallel of latitude, and consequently within the area which Russia desires should be considered the neutral zone, whether, so far as British interests are concerned, that suggestion receives the approval of His Majesty's Government; and whether any, and, if so, what, steps have been taken, or will be taken, should necessity arise, to protect British interests in Korea, seeing that the United States have taken active measures for the protection of their interests in Korea.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.): No suggestion for the creation of a neutral zone in Korea is before His Majesty's Government, and there is consequently no occasion for us to express any opinion on the subject. His Majesty's Minister at Seoul will afford to British interests and subjects all necessary assistance and protection. I am not aware of the measures which the hon. Member refers to as having been taken by the United States.

Niuchwang.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in the interests of British trade, His Majesty's Government are taking steps with a view of securing an arrangement between the Powers for the neutralisation of the Chinese treaty port of Niuchwang during the Russo-Japanese war.

Earl PERCY: No, Sir. His Majesty's Government do not consider that it would be practicable to secure the neutralisation of any territory in the actual occupation of one of the belligerents.

Chinese Railways—British Bondholders' Interests.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that the net receipts of the Shan-hai-Kwan, Niuchwang, Hsin-min-tung Railway are allocated as security to British bondholders, His Majesty's Government have taken any steps for the purpose of safeguarding these lines and maintaining the present management and control.

Earl PERCY: The answer is in the negative. The Shan-hai-Kwan, Niuchwang, Hsin-min-tung Railway is a Chinese line and is protected by Chinese railway guards and troops.

Russia and Manchuria.

Mr. JOSEPH WALTON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the omission of the Russian Government in their declaration of the 8th January to renew their assurances as to their intention of evacuating Manchuria, His Majesty's Government have addressed any representations to the Russian Government on this point; and, if so, whether he can state to the House the reply received.

Earl PERCY: The hon. Member will find the information asked for at page 98 of the Blue-book which will be distributed to-day.

Chinese Labour in the Transvaal.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there are any treaties between Great Britain and China under which the assent of the Chinese Government would be necessary before the recruiting of labourers for the Transvaal could be initiated; and, if so, whether the Chinese Government have yet given their assent to such recruitment.

Earl PERCY: The recruitment of labourers in China is governed by the provisions of Article V. of the Treaty of Pekin. His Majesty's Government have been informed by the Chinese Minister that the draft Ordinance contains nothing which is likely to conflict with the proposals he may have to make when the time comes for negotiating the regulations provided for in this Article.

Transvaal Mines Recruits from British Central Africa.

Mr. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government has sanctioned the recruiting of 5,000 more natives in the British Central African Protectorate for the Transvaal mines; and under what terms is it proposed that they shall be recruited.

Earl PERCY: The answer to the first Question is in the affirmative. The conditions of recruitment are given in Africa No. 2, 1903, but it has been decided that recruiting shall in future be confined to the colder regions of the Central Africa Protectorate and that the arrival in the Transvaal of those who may enlist shall be postponed until August.

Colonial Insurances and Income Tax.

Mr. THORNTON (Clapham): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, as the provisions of the Income Tax Acts which authorise an allowance in respect of life insurance premiums do not include Colonial Government Insurances, he will consider the desirability of so amending these Statutes that Colonial Insurances may be put on the same footing as those issued in the United Kingdom.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.): As the hon. Member states, legislation is required in order to extend to Indian and Colonial Insurance Companies the exemption from income tax on premiums which is granted to Insurance Offices with head offices in the United Kingdom. I am making inquiries into the conditions under which Insurance companies carry on their business in the respective Colonies and in India, with a view to finding out whether in each case the same treatment is accorded to companies with local head offices and companies with head offices in the United Kingdom. Until I am in possession of the result of those inquires, I am unable to make any definite statement as to legislation.

Immature Whisky and Lunacy and Crime.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the resolution adopted by the Portsmouth Town Council on the 8th instant; and whether, in view of the increase in lunacy and crime in England consequent on the consumption of immature potable spirits, he will consider the advisability of prohibiting the clearing from bond of whisky, rum, or brandy, until it has matured for three years.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The subject referred to by the hon. Member was carefully considered by a Select Committee of this House in 1890. They reported that it was not desirable to pass any compulsory law in regard to age. Any attempt to deal with the subject by legislation would be a matter of much difficulty, and I am not prepared to make proposals such as the hon. Member suggests.

Mr. MACVEAGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that such regulations have been made in Canada and other countries? What would be the difficulty in applying them to this country?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have no information on the point.

Departmental Administration.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state the date of the appointment of the Inter-Departmental Committee to consider the duties, pay, and organisation of the Board of Trade, the Local Government Board, and other Departments, the names of the Committee, how many meetings the Committee have held, and when it is expected that the Committee will present their Report.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I must ask my hon. friend to refer to the answer which I gave to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil on the 8th instant.† The Committee have held four meetings, and will sit again this week.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY. But is it not the fact that the Committee held only one meeting in six months, and can the right hon. Gentleman say why the Local Government Board took so long to supply the information asked for?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Committee held a preliminary meeting and decided to get certain information from the Board of Trade and the Local Government Board, and the long delay before the holding of the meeting was due to the fact that they were awaiting the reply from the Local Government Board.

Fraudulent Spirits.

Mr. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that English spirit simply reduced, coloured, bottled, and labelled is every week being made up and sent out by itself, as Irish or Scotch whisky, according to the needs of the customer; that this takes place in the bonded warehouses in this country with the cognisance of the Excise officials, who are cautioned not to interfere; and that such so-called Scotch whisky is obtained from such materials as molasses, glucose, rice, and sugar, he will give instructions that such alcoholic drinks shall be properly described.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The matter referred to is not one which can be adequately dealt with within the limits of an answer to a Question, but I may say that the objects desired by the hon. Member could not be obtained by the issue of instructions by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. KILBRIDE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Question is based on a letter in the Press signed by an Inland Revenue official?

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† See page 580.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have not seen the letter. An Inland Revenue officer has no right to communicate with the Press in regard to his official duties.

Compulsory Vaccination.

MR. CROOKS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will furnish the House with the total time lost and the cost incurred through the enforcement of vaccination in all the Government Departments in England.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): I regret that it is not possible to give this information without the expenditure of an amount of time and trouble which could hardly be justified by the result.

Firth of Forth Fisheries.

CAPTAIN ELLICE (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to complaints made by the fishermen on the Fife coasts as to trawlers working inside the enclosed waters of the Firth of Forth and St. Andrews Bay; and, if so, whether he can make arrangements whereby the light-keepers on the Island of May might report to the police authorities any cases of illegal trawling which might come under their notice.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): Since the beginning of 1903 the Fishery Board have received eight complaints from or on behalf of Fife fishermen regarding illegal trawling in the Firth of Forth and St. Andrews Bay. In the same period a number of detections were made by the Board's cruisers, and six convictions were obtained, while one case is pending. No arrangement exists for the keepers in the May Island lighthouse reporting cases of illegal trawling to the authorities, and there are grave objections to any arrangement which, in such a situation, could be of any practical benefit.

Legal Status of Mr. Commissioner Fitzgerald.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland what is the legal *status* of Mr. Commissioner Fitzgerald under the Land Acts; and whether he is a Judge of the High Court of Justice, and entitled to rank as such.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): For the purposes of the Land Acts and Land Purchase Acts, Mr. Fitzgerald's *status* is that of a Judicial Commissioner, but he is not, in my opinion, a judge of the High Court of Justice, nor is he entitled to rank as such.

Dingle Railway.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any steps have yet been taken with a view to relieve the ratepayers of county Kerry of the burden which is caused by the Dingle Railway.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): I have been conducting prolonged negotiations with the Directors of the Great Southern and Western Railway with a view to the transfer of this line to the system of that company. I regret to say that even now I have not reached a satisfactory conclusion. But I do not despair of reaching one.

Kerry Railway and Harbour Guarantees.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received resolutions from the various public boards in Kerry pointing out the burdens in the shape of railway and harbour guarantees which the county, half of which is congested, has to bear; whether he intends to do something to lessen this tax; and whether he could apply a portion of the money accumulating under Section 57 of the Local Government Act of 1898 for this purpose.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir, I have received a number of such resolutions. The reference at the end of the Question should be to Section 58, not 57, of the Act of 1898. I am not prepared to indicate the nature of legislative or other action which would be taken in the event of my coming to terms with the Great Southern and Western Railway.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the extent to which this burden falls on Kerry—several thousands a year?

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir, and we have long recognised the desirability of transferring these small lines to the great company.

Irish Land Court—Purchase of Insolvent Estates.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have as yet made any proposals to the Land Judge for the purchase of bankrupt estates in his Court; and if any effort is to be made to clear that Court of estates that are hopelessly insolvent.

MR. WYNDHAM: In pursuance of the provisions contained in Section 7 of the Act of last year, the Commissioners have taken steps with a view to the purchase of fourteen estates, for the sale of which absolute orders had been made in the Land Judge's Court.

Treatment of the Blind in Ireland.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the intention of the Government to deal with the condition of the blind in Ireland during the present session, in accordance with the finding of the Royal Commission of 1889, which recommended special treatment for them.

MR. WYNDHAM: I cannot give a pledge to deal with this matter during the present session.

Land Purchase in County Armagh.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Commissioners of Education in Ireland, who own several townlands near Loughgilly, county Armagh, have through their secretary declined to negotiate with their tenants for the sale of their estate save through their agent who demands twenty-seven and three-quarter years purchase; and, if so, whether he will take steps to induce the Commissioners of Education to sell to their tenants through the machinery of the Estates Commissioners.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Commissioners are quite willing, I am informed, to negotiate with the tenants. But as they are in the position of public trustees who are discharging their statutory trusts, the hon. Member must see that I have no power to suggest to them the mode in which the negotiations should be conducted.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the agent in all these cases is the notorious Mr. Johnson.

*MR. SPEAKER: That does not arise out of the Question.

Iveagh-Pirrie Motor-Car Service.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can give any further information regarding the Iveagh-Pirrie motor-car service promised to be set up in Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir, I should be glad to do so if I obtain an opportunity more suited to a statement which must be lengthy if it is to be comprehensive. Perhaps the hon. Member will await the discussion of the Motion on the subject of transit rates standing in the name of the hon. Member for Cork for the 23rd instant, or put down an unstarred Question.

Land Purchase in County Galway.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the proposed scheme of division and sale of a grass farm in the parishes of Laurencetown and Killimer, county Galway, on the property of M. G. Comyn Kenny; whether he is aware that placards or circulars have been posted or distributed in the district announcing that the landlord is about to mark out the bounds as far as possible to suit the requirements of the people; that it is proposed to put up to competition the several divisions, a fine to be paid in each case preliminary to acceptance as tenant, and their sale to be affected under the Land Purchase Act of last year; and whether, seeing that it is stated in the placard or circular that the Estates Commissioners can advance sufficient money to the purchasers to build dwelling-houses and execute improvements on these projected buildings, he will state if a correspondence in connection with this proposed scheme has taken place between Mr. Kenny and the Estates Commissioners, and whether their sanction has been obtained.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Commisioners have no knowledge of the matters mentioned in the Question. No correspondence has taken place with them on the subject.

Arklow Harbour.

MR. COGAN (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that for some years past complaints have been made by the Harbour Commissioners and the people of Arklow of the condition of the harbour, resulting in periodical closing up of it to marine traffic; and that for the past five months vessels have been unable either to enter or leave the harbour; and whether, seeing that the Harbour Commissioners represent d to the Board of Works and their engineer the urgency of the matter, and that the engineer finished his survey a month ago, he can state whether the engineer has yet reported to his Board; and, if so, whether the Government is prepared to do anything towards putting the harbour in a safe navigable condition so as to save to the town its existing industries.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Report of the Board of Work's Engineer has been made to that Department and will shortly be before me. In the meantime it may be desirable to point out that the liability for the maintenance of this harbour is vested in the Harbour Commissioners, not the Government.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: Why has the Report been so long delayed?

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Was not this defective work done by the Board of Works?

MR. WYNDHAM asked for notice of the Question.

Gault Estate, County Tyrone.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, seeing that the Master of the Rolls made in 1892 an absolute order for the sale of the Gault Estate, Trillick, county Tyrone, he can state what, after twelve years, is the position of the property, and if there is any prospect of the sale of the estate.

MR. WYNDHAM: An absolute Order for the sale of this estate was made by the Land Judge in 1896. No further steps appear to have been taken since that date; but I am informed that the solicitors having carriage of the sale have been required to attend before the Land Judge and account for the delay.

Bruff School Teacher.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Michael Quinlan, of Bruff, county Limerick, on 29th September last wrote to the Office of National Education, Ireland, asking for the extension of the evening school grant to Bruff, and was informed that the application would be referred to the inspector for report; that the school was opened on the following week, a committee being duly formed; that subsequently, as a result of the inspector's visit, aid was refused to the school on the alleged want of qualification on the part of the teacher, Mr. P. J. Casey, who conducts a school in the town with an average of forty pupils, teaching the various branches of English education; that in December, on a further application, a senior inspector was sent down, who also reported that aid could not be granted for the school, although the teacher was not examined and had made sixty two attendances out of the necessary seventy; and, if so, will he say in what way the teacher lacks the necessary qualifications, and arrange that the teacher shall be given the chance of an examination to prove his competency for the position.

MR. WYNDHAM: The inspector who reported on the first application declined to recommend a grant, and the senior inspector, to whom the second application was referred, also declined to recommend it. The qualifications of the teacher was only one of the considerations upon which the decision of the Commissioners was based. The matter is not one calling for the intervention of the Government.

Longford Land Commission.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when it is proposed to hold another sitting of the Head Land Commission in Longford for the hearing of appeals; and will he, with a view to effecting the payment of the March rents, direct them to hold a sitting before 20th March at latest.

MR. WYNDHAM: No date has yet been fixed; and I am informed by the Commissioners that it will not be possible for them to hold a sitting at Longford before the date mentioned. The delay will not be to the detriment of the parties affected, as the hon. Member will observe on referring to Section 3, Subsection 3, of the Land Law Act, 1896.

Irish Workhouse Inspectors.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. O'Connor, the lately appointed inspector of the Local Government Board for Ireland, has any instructions over and above the instructions given to all the other inspectors with reference to his visits to workhouses in his district; and will he state on whose recommendation this gentleman, who was an auditor of the Local Government Board, was appointed, and how long he held the position before being promoted to inspectorship.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reply to the first part of the Question is in the negative. Mr. O'Connor held the position of auditor for three years before he was transferred to the Inspection Staff. It was upon the recommendation of the Vice-President of the Board, concurred in by me, that this gentleman, who had discharged with efficiency his duties as auditor, was selected for the office of inspector.

Galbraith Estate, Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any overtures have been made to the Estates Commissioners for the purchase, as a congested estate, of the Galbraith Estate in the barony and county of Longford; and, if not, will he direct the Commissioners to consider the case of this estate with a view to purchase and resale to the tenants.

MR. WYNDHAM: No such overtures have been made. I shall be glad, however, to bring the suggestion of the hon. Member under the notice of the Estates Commissioners.

Irish Development Grant Fund.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any portion of the Ireland Development Grant Fund is available for drainage and the construction and repairing of bridges and byeroads leading into backward districts, the inhabitants of which have no road accommodation; and whether local public bodies in Ireland may make application for grants from that fund.

MR. WYNDHAM: Many applications have been made by local bodies for grants from this fund. The manner in which it is proposed to allocate it will appear in the Estimate to be laid before Parliament pursuant to the requirements of the Act of last year.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Will the representatives for Ireland be consulted before the Estimate is framed?

MR. WYNDHAM: I should be glad of an opportunity of doing so, but I rather think I have their views.

Limerick Gaol Doctor.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain why the services of Dr. John Holmes, Medical Officer to the Female Prison, Limerick, have been dispensed with; what number of years Dr. Holmes has been in charge of this prison; and what pension or compensation in lieu of pension, if any, has been offered to the doctor.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Dr. Holmes held the position of temporary medical officer of the female prison for thirteen years. His services were dispensed with upon the amalgamation of the medical officership of the male and female prisons. He was not entitled to a pension or compensation.

Mr. JOYCE: Will the right hon. Gentleman not consider this doctor's long term of service with a view of giving him some compensation?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I am afraid I cannot give an undertaking of that kind. It is, I am told, impossible to give a pension contrary to the statute.

Mr. JOYCE: I shall bring the matter up again.

Company Legislation.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury why he has not introduced legislation, as stated by him to the House of Commons on the 19th February, 1903, to meet cases of fraud similar to that of Whitaker Wright; and whether, having regard to the conviction of Whitaker Wright, under the provisions of the sections of the Criminal Law Consolidation Acts referred to by the Judge in passing sentence on him, he still proposes to introduce such legislation.

* The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's)—(for Mr. A. J. Balfour): The introduction of the Bill in question was postponed pending the recent trial. It is drafted, and will be introduced in a few days.

Whitaker Wright Trial Costs.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what steps, if any, do the Government intend to take to recoup the expenses sustained by the private prosecutors in the recent trial of Whitaker Wright; and whether there will be any public recognition of their services.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (for Mr. A. J. Balfour): As was stated by the Attorney-General on the first day of the session the Government will defray the costs of the prosecution of Whitaker Wright.† I do not know what form of "public recognition" the hon. Gentleman has in his mind; but it is not proposed by the Government to promote a testimonial for the benefit of those who undertook the prosecution.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: Will the costs to be repaid by the Government include the costs of the private gentleman who forced on the trial?

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I am afraid I cannot answer that Question offhand?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I will put it down.

Russia and the Dardanelles.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury has the Russian Government approached His Majesty's Government with a request or suggestion that they should consent to Russian men-of-war passing from the Black Sea through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles; in view of the fact that such a passage would be a violation of European treaties, what attitude will His Majesty's Government take on this point; and can any Papers be laid.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (for Mr. A. J. Balfour): His Majesty's Government have not been approached with any such request or suggestion. There is no reason whatever for supposing that the Russian Government contemplate a step which would involve a distinct violation of their treaty obligations to the European Powers.

CHINESE LABOUR FOR THE TRANSVAAL.

Sir CHARLES McLAREN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when an opportunity will be given to the House of expressing an opinion on Chinese labour in the Transvaal Colony.

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†See page 161.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (for Mr. A. J. BALFOUR): The hon. Member asks me whether any opportunity, other than the Address, will be given for the discussion of the question of Chinese labour in the Transvaal Colony. I regret that I cannot offer any other day. An opportunity occurs on the Address, and if that opportunity is not taken, seeing the length to which the debate has extended and the amount of financial business which has to be taken before Easter, I am afraid I cannot afford, out of Government time, any other opportunity.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I understand that the right hon. Gentleman adheres to the idea, which has always possessed the Government, that the Amendment on the Address will be a sufficient and seasonable opportunity of discussing this matter, notwithstanding that the undertaking of the Secretary for the Colonies was that the Government would give an opportunity for that discussion. I think that all one can do now is to say that, considering the information which is still withheld from us—I do not say unreasonably withheld, but still not in our possession—in regard to the regulations for enforcing the labour, and other matters, I hope it will be understood that, when these pieces of information now lacking are in our hands, and when the Government have taken action in the matter, it will be open to us, if we see fit, to move a vote of censure.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I understood that my right hon. friend had only given an assurance that an opportunity would be given to the House of expressing its opinion upon this question before the Ordinance was approved. I understand that the opportunity has been taken by an hon. Member opposite of raising the question on the Address. I am afraid I must confirm the answer I have given. Of course it is in the right of the Leader of the Opposition or any other Member on that Bench to claim a day for a vote of censure, which, of course, the Government will give at once.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Can the right hon. Gentleman not consider the advisability of postponing the final decision of this matter until the views in detail upon the subject held by Australia and New Zealand are laid before Members of the House? There is a strong feeling in Australia and New Zealand, and we are not in full possession of it.

[No answer was returned.]

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Wait till Dick Seddon comes home again.

The Fiscal Debate.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): May I ask the Home Secretary, as representing the Leader of the House, whether he is aware that a large number of Members who have risen to speak on the Amendment to the Address now before the House have been accorded no opportunity of expressing their opinion (OPPOSITION cheers), and that, in particular, no representatives of the principal commercial or shipping centres, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, or the City of London (cries of "Bradford" and laughter), have yet taken part in the debate, excepting two members of the Government, who represent Divisions of Glasgow and Leeds respectively; and whether, having regard to the great importance of the fiscal question to the mercantile and shipping interests, he will extend the period allotted to the debate in order that reasonable facilities may be given?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I quite sympathise with the desire of many hon. Gentlemen to take part in this debate, but I do honestly think that it has been extended quite a sufficiently long time. Considering the amount of time at the disposal of the Government before the financial year closes, and as representing the Leader of the House, I have to take care that the House is not brought to a deadlock. (Ironical cheers.) Hon. Gentlemen opposite may cheer, but I venture to point out to them that, Leader as I am temporarily—very unworthily (cries of "No")—I have taken unusual care in this debate to secure the convenience of private Members, and, with the consent of the Front Bench opposite, given to my right hon. friend the Member for Leeds, it was arranged that as few Members of the two Front Benches as possible should take part in the debate. In these circumstances I cannot make any departure from an honourable understanding which has been come to between the two Front Benches.

NEW WRITS.

New Writ for the County of York (Southern part of the West Riding, Normanton Division), in the room of Benjamin Pickard, esquire, deceased.—(*Mr. Herbert Gladstone.*)

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

John Bamford Slack, esquire, for the County of Herts (Mid or St. Alban's Division).

NEW BILLS.

COAL MINES (EMPLOYMENT) BILL.

"To amend the provisions of the Coal Mines Regulation Acts which relate to employment," presented by Sir Charles Dilke; supported by Mr. Keir Hardie, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), Mr. Holland, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Bell, Mr. Cremer, and Mr. Joseph Walton; to be read a second time upon Friday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 57.]

LANDS VALUATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend The Lands Valuation (Scotland) Act, 1854," presented by Mr. McCrae; supported by Mr. Bryce, Sir John Leng, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. John Dewar, and Mr. Robert Wallace; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 26th April; and to be printed. [Bill 58.]

NURSES BILL.

"To regulate the qualification of trained Nurses, and to provide for their registration," presented by Dr. Farquharson; supported by Mr. Haldane, Sir Thomas Wrightson, Sir James Joicey, Sir John Tuke, Mr. H. C. Smith, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Black, Mr. Colston, Mr. Eve, and Dr. Thompson; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 59.]

PUBLIC LIBRARIES BILL.

"To amend the Acts relating to Public Libraries by removing the existing limit to the amount of the library rate," presented by Mr. Tennant; supported by Sir Albert Rollit, Sir William Houldsworth, Sir Alfred Thomas, Mr. Thornton, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Middlemore, Mr. Hunter Craig, and Mr. Haldane; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 25th February, and to be printed. [Bill 60.]

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT (1901) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the provisions for escape from fire in Factories and Workshops," presented by Mr. Tennant; supported by Captain Norton, Mr. Hugh Law, Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Mr. John Burns, Sir John Dickson-Poynder, and Mr. Peel; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 25th February, and to be printed. [Bill 61.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (KING'S SPEECH, MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Ordered, That the Proceedings on the King's Speech (Motion for an Address), if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House). (*Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*)

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

(TENTH DAY.)

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvment are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being.'"—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said that in one respect he enjoyed an advantage in regard to the subject matter of this debate, and that was that there was no one in his constituency who had the smallest doubt as to his opinions upon this matter. To avoid any misconception as to the views he had expressed during the twenty years he had been a Member of the House, he ventured to claim for a short time the indulgence of the House. There was nothing new in the fiscal campaign in which they were now engaged, and he had long felt that this question would ultimately be taken up by a statesman of the first rank and the greatest ability, like the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Nearly a quarter of a century ago he had opportunities of seeing the terrible destitution and misery amongst the great mass of working classes in the East End of London and other great cities. From the seats under the gallery to which he had access he heard Mr. Wheelhouse in 1880 move for a Committee.

"To consider the commercial relations at present existing between England and foreign nations, especially with regard to the import of manufactured goods from abroad, as well as the effect caused by our system of one-sided so called free trade with a view, if possible, of ameliorating the condition of the wage-earning classes of this country."

Mr. Gladstone's Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget Speech in 1881, said—

"I wish Parliament to understand that we are not making ground at present, I speak of the last few years and without reference to Party differences I say we are rather losing than making ground."

As the late Sir Stafford Northcote pointed out, this decline began in the year 1872. Then came Mr. Gladstone's failure to make a treaty with Republican France. A year passed and then came forward the real originator of the fair trade movement in this House. Hon. Members might think he referred to his right hon. friend the Member for Thanet, to Mr. Farrer Ecroyd, then Member for Preston, to the veteran Mr. Cunliffe Lester, now Lord Masham, or to his right hon. friend the Member for Sleaford. Not at all. He referred to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was he who by his extraordinary recantation, last year, of his previous opinions and his refusal to let colonial wheat free into the United Kingdom, was the cause of all this turmoil. If he were to read his speech of 24th March, 1882, making the necessary alterations in the figures, to bring them up to date, it would be the best argument against the Motion of the Member for Montrose. On 24th March, 1882, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, then representing the Tower Hamlets, moved unsuccessfully—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the effects which the tariffs in force in foreign countries have upon the principal branches of British trade and commerce and into the possibility of removing by legislation or otherwise any impediment to the fullest development of the manufacturing and commercial industry of the United Kingdom."

The right hon. Gentleman called attention to the increase of pauperism, to the increase of emigration, and said—

"The fact was that the country was going back and that retrogression had been attributed by large numbers of the people to the commercial policy of the country, and the want of confidence which it had engendered, and which had not been diminished by the total failure of Mr. Gladstone's Government in the previous year, in the negotiations for a treaty of commerce with the French Republic. He felt certain that we could successfully compete with all the world if our manufacturers could secure a fair field and no favour. He denied that our progress was mainly attributable to our commercial policy. If the exports to foreign countries were separated from the exports to British possessions the diminution in the exports to foreign countries was very remarkable. Instead of decreasing 30 per cent. like our foreign trade, they increased in 1880 to £75,000,000 or 25 per cent. That increase would have been still greater if it had not been for a decrease of about 20 per cent. in our exports to Canada and 25 per cent in our exports to Victoria, which was an evidence of the effect of their tariff. Nothing could show more forcibly the immense value to us, as outlets for our manufactures, of our colonies and the great importance of doing all in our power to draw them closer to us."

There was nothing, said the right hon. Gentleman—

"Against the principles of free trade in retaliation, but there was, above all, the question of drawing closer together the bonds which united us with our colonies. If that were feasible he was sure it would meet with the assent and support of all classes in the country and of hon. Members on both sides of the House."

What a change in the right hon. Gentleman. It is he who proposed this resolution who had turned round and become the great opponent. The Motion was strongly supported by the late Sir Stafford Northcote, and my friend, then Member for Preston, Mr. Farrer Ecroyd speaking for the North of England. But it was defeated by Mr. Gladstone's Government by a majority of fifty-one. The movement, however, went on under the auspices of the Fair Trade League and encouraged by the Imperial Federation League, presided over by Lord Rosebery, and founded by that great patriot and Liberal, the late right hon. W. E. Forster, who said to the hon. Sir Charles Tupper, High Commissioner for Canada—

"I am a free-trader, but I am not so fanatical a free-trader that I should not be perfectly willing to adopt the policy of fiscal arrangements by which the outlying portions of the Empire would be treated by the mother country on a different footing to foreign countries, for the great and important object of binding this great Empire together."

In 1885, he the speaker, was returned to this House, and had been four times subsequently, by Central Sheffield, to further this policy by all means in his power. Unfortunately, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon was allured to the Treasury Bench and straightway dropped his previous convictions—for he was sure in 1882 he was sincere—but the movement went on. In 1887 the National Union of Conservative Associations at Oxford passed at his instance a resolution by 1,000 to 12 declaring—

Sir Howard Vincent.

"That the continued depression in trade and agriculture, the increase in the scarcity of employment and the consequent distress among all classes, render reform in the policy of the United Kingdom as regards foreign imports and the influx of foreigners a matter of vital necessity to the people of Great Britain and Ireland."

Twelve times the Conference of the National Union had after full notice and deliberation endorsed that resolution and urged the Government to carry out to the full the views enunciated by the Colonial Conferences of 1887, 1897, and 1902 on the subject of preferential trade between all parts of the British Empire. The Prime Minister and his right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham had only, therefore, tardily voiced the earnest wishes through many years of the great majority of the Conservative and Unionist Party throughout the country. It became of importance, therefore, to consider what was the attitude of the late Lord Salisbury, four times Prime Minister in the past twenty years, and for all time a beacon light in the annals of the Unionist Party. There had lately been some correspondence in regard to the late Lord Salisbury's view of this question. He had the advantage of having been in frequent communication with Lord Salisbury on this matter during the last twenty years, and he honestly believed that his Lordship shared in the main the principles which were now advocated by the Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Perhaps the House would allow him to quote one or two expressions of opinion, and to refer to some of the Acts that tended to confirm this view. On 10th November, 1890, Lord Salisbury said in the City of London,—

"We know that every bit of the world's surface which is not under the British Flag is a country which may be, and probably will be, closed to us by a hostile tariff. It is to the trade that is carried on within the Empire that we look for the vital force of the commerce of this country."

On 12th February, 1891, Lord Salisbury said—

"Whenever such a modification of English opinion takes place, so that the idea of discrimination of duties in favour of colonial produce shall be a fiscal possibility, I shall not oppose the wish to have the matter thoroughly discussed between ourselves and the Colonies."

The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet would remember heading a deputation that waited on Lord Salisbury on 19th June, 1891, with regard to the treaties which had been negotiated between 1862 and 1865. What was Lord Salisbury's answer to his right hon. friend and the representatives from all parts of the country who accompanied him? He said—

> "Those who believe, as you believe, that you are the representatives of a rising movement in possession of a policy which only requires to be explained to your countrymen to be adopted by them, your duty is plain—spare no pains in the effort of impressing it upon your fellow men, you are invited to go forth and fight for it."

That injunction was obeyed, and the United Empire Trade League was formed. Under its auspices meetings were held in all parts of the country, and in the large towns throughout the Empire. In 1897 they won their first rampart. After six years hard work on the part of the League, Lord Salisbury, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, denounced the Gladstone treaties forbidding the Colonies putting lighter duties on British goods than upon foreign goods, and gave a year's notice to terminate them in order to enable the Colonies, if they wished, to treat British goods more favourably than foreign goods. On 1st August, 1898, the notices expired, and from midnight one-fourth of the Canadian duty was remitted upon—

> "Articles the growth, produce, or manufacture of Great Britain and Ireland, of India, or any British colony, or upon goods in which at least 25 per cent. of the value was British labour."

He could quote, if time allowed, numerous other expressions from the public speeches of Lord Salisbury in this connection such as—

> "Under the present conditions of our tariff no one cares two straws about the commercial favour of England,"

And that—

> "We are fighting with our hands tied against armed men."

The long and short of it was that he was so convinced of the sympathy of the late Lord Salisbury with this movement, that, with the concurrence of his hon. friends who acted with him, he invited his Lordship, after resigning the office of Prime Minister, to become president of the United Empire Trade League. Lord Salisbury, who was usually very prompt in his replies, took a month to consider the invitation, and his answer was nearly the last holograph letter he wrote. In that letter he said—

> "At this moment so many diverse questions are at issue that I should feel unwilling to accept the presidency you kindly offer me. I might find it difficult to express myself so as to avoid misconception. We do not yet precisely know the form which the discussion will take in our own ranks."

The House would see there was no refusal, only a desire to avoid any disagreement in the Unionist Party.

He would now ask the House to consider the present state of trade and employment, and to consider how much worse was the state of affairs since 1882—that was since this matter was brought before the House by his right hon. friend the Member for Croydon, then a private Member. He would ask hon. Members to consider the facts and to say whether they did not call for a remedy. There were many hon. Gentlemen opposite who not only in private but in public thought with the tariff reformers in this matter. [Cries of "Name."] Mr. Storey, President of the Liberal Federation. It was all very well for hon. Gentlemen to laugh at that name, but Mr. Storey had rendered yeoman service to the Liberal Party as President of the Liberal Federation. But that was the way the Liberal Party treated their old friends. The President of the Liberal Association of the Elland Division took exactly the same view. Another instance was that of Mr. Thomas Brassey, son of Lord Brassey. [Laughter.] They laughed at him, but they adopted him as a candidate. They spoke very highly of him at Devonport and elsewhere. They would find plenty of instances in constituencies represented by Liberals of men who were in favour of tariff reform. He was extremely anxious not to raise any controversial questions, and therefore he would not refer Liberals to old friends who had left them on this question.

If they would look at the matter dispassionately, they would see that the state of affairs during the last twenty-four years had become much worse.

The Board of Trade Blue-books showed that in the ten years, 1891 to 1900, the imports for consumption increased by £534,000,000, and the exports by only £55,000,000. There was an average yearly excess of £145,000,000 in foreign imports over our exports. Comparing the first ten years with the last, our exports of cotton manufactures fell by £60,000,000; our exports of iron and steel fell by £29,000,000; our exports of woollen and worsted manufactures fell by £23,000,000; of hardware and cutlery by £11,000,000; and of linen manufactures, leather manufactures, steam engines, copper and jute manufactures, over £12,000,000—a total fall of £137,000,000 in manufactured exports. Against that we could only set a rise of £34,000,000 in the exports of machinery other than steam engines; of £5,000,000 in apparel and slops; and of £10,000,000 in chemical products. Were we to submit to this loss of £87,000,000 in our exports of manufactured goods, coupled with a rise in twenty years in the import of foreign manufactured goods of £100,000,000, without inquiry or effort to remedy a state of things so disastrous to the producers of this country? Our exports to France fell in the ten years 1891 to 1900 compared to the previous ten years by £8,000,000; to the United States by £63,000,000; to Italy by £7,000,000. Our exports to some countries, it was true, rose, but while the imports from all sources into all foreign countries was increased by 11 per cent., our export trade to all foreign countries only increased by 4 per cent.; and Return 363 of 1898 shows that each £100 of English foreign trade in 1854 became in 1897 £253 19s. 9d., while each £100 of the foreign trade in 1854 of the twelve principal foreign nations under protection became £454 3s. 5d., or nearly double our progress. On 24th March, 1882, the President of the Board of Trade declared that "our imports of manufactures and half manufactures are only £35,000,000." Last year, 1903, the Trade and Navigation Returns for December showed that they were £134,659,090, or close on £135,000,000. This gain of £100,000,000 sterling of foreign manufacturers in our home market in twenty years was surely enough to make any man reconsider the position, and especially as 10,000,000 more pairs of hands had been added to our population, they had lost the £60,000,000 which had been paid in wages to the foreign workman.

Now what had been the result of this state of affairs as regard the employment of the masses. The *Labour Gazette* for January showed that 37,500 trades unionists were out of employment, that 3,000,000 workpeople sustained decreases in wages in the last three years, that on a single day last December 370,469 were dependent on poor law relief, and that 261,363 English, Scotch and Irish, in despair of obtaining a living at home, had to emigrate mostly to protected countries, and give place to 80,000 aliens. He would bring the matter nearer home to his own constituency. Nearly every trade was falling. This was what the *Sheffield Telegraph* of that morning said—

> "The claims on the fund for the relief of the distress in Sheffield are still very pressing, and in order to provide one meal a day for the penniless unemployed and their families further help is urgently required."

They received only that morning from the Duke of Norfolk, on the occasion of his marriage, a contribution of £1,000, which was only another testimony of his Grace's great kindness to the people of Sheffield. The hon. Baronet the Member for Hallamshire, who generally sat opposite, and whose absence he was afraid was due to illness, said at a meeting in the Sheffield Town Hall on 9th February, that—

> "He was afraid the present depressed state of trade would continue for some time, and that there would be no great improvement in business for a considerable period."

This was a most lamentable state of affairs; and, if his view was not the right one, do let them have from hon. Members opposite some remedy. He did not see the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs, but he was sitting behind the Member for Forest of Dean when that right hon. Baronet said that this prosperity argument had been pushed much too far. The other day when he was banqueted by his friends at the New Reform Club. He said—

> "Mr. Chamberlain was right in so far as he said things were not well in this country. They could not feed the hungry with statistics of national prosperity, and stop the pangs of famine by reciting to a man the prodigious number of cheques that had passed through the

clearing-house. They had, therefore, got to propose something better than Mr. Chamberlain. They ought to do something to help the poor from the mire and the needy from the dunghill."

And Mr. Pickersgill, who was formerly Radical Member for Bethnal Green, on another occasion said—

"We must meet Mr. Chamberlain with a policy at least as attractive as his own. It must be a bread-and-butter policy."

During the ast five days debate there had been a score of very interesting and eloquent speeches from hon. Gentlemen opposite, but so far as he heard, and he had listened to nearly everything that had been said, not one single word of suggestion had been offered to remedy this condition of affairs. He had heard a great deal of abuse of the Prime Minister and of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham and those who had been acting under him, but if hon. Gentlemen opposite had a remedy, for goodness sake let the House and the country know what it was. He could promise for himself, and in behalf of everyone on that side of the House, that if they had a remedy for this unfortunate condition of things it would be impartially and thoroughly considered. But if they had no remedy, let them, at all events, give a fair consideration to the remedy which he and his friends suggested. That remedy was to do something to break down the tariff walls opposed to our trade, something to give confidence to labour-employing capital, to prevent British factories being removed to protected countries, to people and develop the Empire, and—that is to trade with those who trade with us, to develop trade within the Empire on mutually advantageous terms and on a preferential basis.

He regretted the depreciatory tone in which some hon. Members had spoken in regard to the great patriotic action of the Dominion of Canada. He referred to what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean. It was lamentable that the latter hon. Gentleman had upbraided and scoffed at the Canadian Government, which had endeavoured to give a preference to British trade. Let him quote from *The Times* of that morning the advantage which British trade had received from Canada—

"In 1897 the exports of British and Irish produce to the North American colonies had fallen to £5,476,161 from £8,141,586 in 1889. They immediately rose in 1898 to £6,154,773, and in 1900 to £8,126,710. Then the Canadian Government increased the preference from 25 per cent. to 33⅓ per cent., and in 1902 the value of the British exports to Canada amounted to £10,720,325, or very nearly double what it was in 1897. The Trade and Navigation Returns show that the improvement in 1903 is continued in almost every line. To take only a few instances, the Canadian purchase of British hardware increased from 4,003 cwt. in 1901 to 8,566 cwt. in 1903, and of galvanised sheets from 7,418 tons in 1901 to 10,900 tons in 1903. The importation of British piece goods also rose from 36,000,000 yards in 1901 to 47,000,000 yards in 1903, and that of British woollen tissues from 3,900,000 yards in 1901 to 5,225,000 yards in 1903."

Again, last year, South Africa, under the auspices of the late Colonial Secretary, gave British imports a preference of 25 per cent. and the result has been that many orders have come to this country which would otherwise have gone to the fierce and state-aided competition of the United States, Belgium, and Germany. The Report of Mr. Birchenough, the Special Commissioner of the Board of Trade, holds out hopes of orders for £100,000,000 worth of goods in the next ten years. And then there had been the action of New Zealand under the ægis of Mr. Seddon. In proposing the Preferential and Reciprocal Trade Bill that great Imperial Statesman said—

"In the Bill we are making no distinction. Canada, Australia, India, wherever British rule prevails, all parts of the Empire are treated alike, and a British Zollverein with the passing of this Bill commences so far as New Zealand is concerned, and the increased duties are chargeable only as against alien countries who have fiscal barriers against us. I claim it to be our duty to alter our customs in favour of the mother country."

and by more than a three to one majority the representatives of our brothers in New Zealand passed the Bill. And were we to sit still and do nothing while our kith and kin conferred these benefits upon us? But for the British possessions, which took last year £109,000,000 of our exports—a rise of £25,000,000 in fifteen years—we should be in a bad way. In 1869, as every one knows, the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean wrote a book entitled "Greater

Britain." There were many passages in it which he thought the right hon. Baronet must now greatly regret. He saw and wrote as a Radical in the anti-colonial Radical days of thirty-five or forty years ago. For instance on page 398 of the 3rd edition the right hon. Baronet said—

> "With the more enlightened thinkers of England separation from the Colonies has for many years been a favourite idea."

That was in entire accord with Mr. Cobden's view. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Montrose Burghs said the other day, what was perfectly true, that he was better acquainted with the "Life of Cobden" than he himself was. But on page 231 of the right hon. Gentleman's "Life of Cobden," Cobden's views regarding the Colonies were given in a very notable letter to Mr. Ashworth. He wrote—

> "The colonial system with all its dazzling appeals to the passions of the people can never be got rid of except by the indirect process of free trade, which will gradually and imperceptibly loose the bonds which unite our colonies to us by a mistaken notion of self-interest."

That view might still be entertained by hon. Gentlemen opposite, but it was not the view which was entertained by any hon. Gentleman on those Benches or by their supporters in the country. Their desire was to do all they possibly could to draw the Colonies closer to the mother country and to recognise the magnificent services they had rendered to the Empire in recent years. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean was one of the most enlightened thinkers in England, and he would invite the attention of the House to a passage from the right hon. Gentleman's book "Greater Britain." On page 331 he wrote—

> "It would seem as though we free-traders had become nearly as bigoted in favour of free trade as our former opponents were in favour of protection . . . . Protection is no mere national delusion; it is a system deliberately adopted with open eyes as one conducive to the country's welfare."

Let them then deal with the matter not as bigots or fanatics on one side or the other but let them look at it as business men from a business point of view. The conclusion which he ventured to offer was that the best way to develop a business was to develop it on the lines which appeared most promising. The export trade between the Colonies and the mother country showed a return of £3 per head. It was surely better to develop trade in that direction than to endeavour to develop trade with foreign countries which only gave a return of a few shillings per head. The Duke of Devonshire was sometimes thought to be opposed to them in this matter; but he happened to have a prospectus of the British Empire League, of which the Duke was chairman, and of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Berwick Division, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Poplar, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Haddingtonshire, were vice-presidents. The objects of the League were stated to be as follows—

> "To promote trade between the United Kingdom and the Colonies and India, and to consider how far it may be possible to modify any laws or treaties which impede freedom of action in the making of reciprocal trade arrangements between the United Kingdom and the Colonies, or between any two or more British colonies and possessions."

They were therefore all agreed, and what was the use in wrangling about details. Let the matter be argued without Party spirit, and let them do their best to devise the quickest remedy. Surely the Prime Minister was right when he said that the first step was to regain liberty of negotiation. The Prime Minister said—

> "It cannot be right for the country with free-trade ideals to enter into competition with protectionist rivals, self-deprived of the only instrument by which their policy can conceivably be modified. The only alternative is to do to foreign nations what they always do to each other, and instead of appealing to economic theories in which they wholly disbelieve, to use fiscal inducements which they thoroughly understand."

He appealed to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and also to his hon. friends who did not agree as to the details of the proposals now before the country, to follow the example of those who, although they might not have agreed with everything which had been stated from the Treasury Bench for twenty years, had always supported the Government to the utmost of their power for the sake of the great national issues which were involved. He appealed to his hon. friends, in this very serious crisis of the world's history, not to divide the Party, and not to support a Motion which was designed not so much with reference to the fiscal question, but in order to create confusion in the ranks of the Unionist Party. His hon. friend the Member for Exeter asked a question the other day which he would take the liberty of answering. His hon. friend wished to know to what port the ship in which he was serving was bound. It was bound to the port of National Prosperity through the channels of constant Employment and Good Wages. They had confidence in their captain the Prime Minister, and they had confidence in their pilot the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. If his hon. friend and others of his hon. friends would vote straight for the Party in accordance with the wishes of their constituencies they need not have the slightest fear that they would be left derelict at the next general election. His sporting friend the Member for South-east Durham was also anxious for an answer to a question he put. He would tell his hon. friend that the horse they were running was the old horse which had been so unaccountably sold by his right hon. friend the Member for Croydon. It was the people's favourite, and was bound to win, although it might be hustled by jockeys whose licences had been withdrawn by the electors of England.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he congratulated his hon. friend on the day of his triumph. His hon. friend could scarcely have expected to see the day when he would hear a highly protectionist speech delivered by him, cheered from the Treasury Bench, not ironically, nor could he expect that he should occupy the proud position of answering for a Government which appeared incapable of answering for itself. The debate had been cheered and enlivened by the concatenation of quotations and figures which had been given by his hon. friend. But even before his hon. friend spoke the debate was one which was not unworthy of this House. They all indeed much regretted the absence of the Prime Minister, and he himself regretted that the debate had not taken place on a substantive Motion but on an Amendment to the Address. Nevertheless, in spite of the absence of the Prime Minister, the debate had been most illuminating and most sensational. The absence of the Prime Minister had deprived the House of an opportunity which sooner or later during the session must be given to it. Five Ministers had resigned and practically a new Ministry now ornamented the Treasury Bench. The concatenation of events by which that result had been achieved must have been of one of two characters. It must either have been characterised by falsehood, treachery, nepotism and jobbery; or Ministers must have left the Government on account of principle and must have left a chief who had treated them with full and frank confidence and to whom they owed the same confidence. They must in that case have left the Government to their own regret and to the equal regret of the Prime Minister; and his right hon. friend must have filled up their places with a sole eye to the efficiency of the Government. He did not know which of those two accounts was correct nor could any man tell in the absence of the Prime Minister. In his absence a very serious doubt hung over those events and sooner or later answers to the questions raised by the resignations by ex-Ministers must be given and the doubt removed. The debate showed that nobody agreed with the Government. The protectionists did not agree with it because it did not go far enough, but they were most nearly agreed with it. Free traders did not agree with it because it, went too far. The Government did not agree with itself, but it was most nearly agreed on protection and he need scarcely add that that state of affairs caused most profound disappointment among those who were inelegantly known as free-fooders and who, in fact, did attach the greatest importance to the retention in this country of cheap and abundant food.

They expected, after the declaration of the Prime Minister at Sheffield, that this debate would be signalised by a complete and full renunciation by the Government of the errors of Birmingham. He thought they had a right to expect that, because to some extent the Sheffield declaration was ambiguous and he had confidently hoped that this ambiguity would be now finally cleared up.

This expectation was confirmed by the speech of the President of the Board of Trade, after hearing which he had come to the conclusion that His Majesty's Government had at last come down on the right side, and he then determined, as had the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, that he could not vote for the Amendment. But how the scene had now changed! The Secretary to the Board of Trade had spoken! The Secretary of State for the Colonies had spoken and disclosed quite a different attitude from that disclosed by the President of the Board of Trade. So had the President of the Local Government Board, and while the President of the Board of Trade had begun by declaring for free trade, these other three members of the Government had declared for protection and food taxing. This was what had so unexpectedly placed the free-fooders in antagonism to the Government. It would be hard for a conscientious Member to vote against the Amendment, because it was gospel truth. Every proposition it contained was undeniable, and the Amendment need not necessarily be considered a vote of want of confidence by the Government. It would have been a vote of want of confidence at the time when the Address in reply to the Speech was a recapitulation of the Speech paragraph by paragraph. Then if a paragraph were amended the whole tenour of the reply was changed But this Address was no more than a expression of thanks, and the addition of a further proposition to it was not a vote of want of confidence in the Government, unless the Government were prepared to deny the truth of the proposition. But even if it be a vote of want of confidence, there were things even more important than the fate of Gentlemen sitting on the Treasury Bench. It was of more importance that the country should have free food than that it should retain the present occupants on the Treasury Bench. On the road leading to the taxation of food he for one would never go, whoever led. And who was leading in that direction? On what road was the Government walking, and to what did it all tend? What the issue before the country would be at the general election he did not know, but the issue now before the House was whether trade should be bond or free whether food should be dear or cheap, whether trade should be left to be conducted by men of business or be taken under the protection of a tariff-loving Government.

It was said that only men of business were competent to deal with the question. How many men of business were there in the Government? Except Lord Londonderry, who earned a precarious livelihood by selling coals, and who, by the way, was a free-trader, there was not on the Treasury Bench a single Minister who had so much as managed an apple stall or undersold a competitor to his destruction. Not one of them even thought himself a man of business except the Colonial Secretary, who supposed himself capable of earning £100 a year as a working man. Of the merits of free trade, protection, and preference he would say little, for they had been well nigh exhausted, but he would say that this country drew from the uttermost ends of the earth all that contributed to the wants of man; to his comforts and his necessities. And it kept them, for year by year it kept more of all commodities, including even gold and silver than it sent away. That had been going on for fifty years. For fifty years we had been accumulating in this way all that man can desire, and we might say in the beautiful words of the psalm—

> "Our garners are full, affording all manner of store. There is no complaining in our streets; happy is that people that is in such a case."

That condition of things represented plenty, wealth, and prosperity; yet the apostles of scarcity complained and declared that the contrary was the case. Might he not add, in the words of the psalmist—

> "Rid me and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood."

The apostles of scarcity asked the country to believe that a full garner meant impending ruin, that the possession of all that men could pray for or want was the sign of poverty and disaster, that the nation was the loser when we sent out less than we received, better off if we sent out more than we received, and at its best if we sent out all and received nothing. They declared that if we must put up with the curse of imports it were better to take that curse from our cousins, whom it was our object to bind to us with links of affection. They called themselves protectionists and preferentialists, which meant much the same thing. By the protectionists we were asked to protect ourselves against the world to the ruin of our customers; by the preferentialists we were asked to prefer the Colonies to the rest of the world to our own ruin. It had been said, and it might, be that protection had succeeded in other countries, but this country was in such a position in the midst of the sea, at the crossing of all the sea roads of the world, as to be different from every other; nor was the example of any other country applicable to it. Our destiny was marked out as the carriers of the world, and our island as best fitted to be the one great, perpetual free port through which the trade movements of the world should take place. Since 1846 this country had been, on the whole, the freest market and freest exchange ever known in history. Protection and preference had been tried, protection was given up in 1846 and preference in 1860; they were both given up because both had been recognised to be a complete failure. Protection failed even for agriculture. In the years 1821, 1833, and 1836, when the corn duties were in force, people flocked from this country to testify to Committees of this House that agriculture was insolvent. A great agricultural expert, Mr. Bernard, in 1836 was asked—

> "Do you believe it possible that farmers can go on at this rate? No, I consider the whole agricultural body is insolvent. On your conscience do you believe that to be true? I do, and consequently my belief is that the whole agricultural body, including all noblemen as well as farmers, is insolvent."

That was in 1836, when we had a high protective tariff, and he was therefore justified in saying that the protective system was a failure. But if it failed for the landlord and the farmer, it failed worse for the poor. In 1801 wheat in this country was 120*s*. a quarter, which was 15s. a bushel. In that year the weekly wage of the Hertfordshire labourer —and he had not forgotten it—was 8s. In 1902 wheat was 28s. 1d. per quarter, or 3s. 6d. a bushel, while the Hertfordshire labourer's wages were 14s. 7d., and the labourer could therefore buy to-day four bushels of wheat instead of half a bushel a century ago. That was the condition of things to or towards which the protectionists would have the country return. The great missionary of scarcity had been going about the country preaching a return to a system of this kind. With false dates and falsified figures, he had drawn false pictures and had gone whining and whimpering of impending ruin in order to lure us back to the reconstruction of a false fabric which had starvation at the base and insolvency at the summit. The right hon. Gentleman had changed his mind often, but he had adopted frank protection by his so-called Scientific Budget and by that crowning travesty of a Royal Commission which would never have entered the mind of any one but a statesman who had been received in a civic hall to the strains of "God save the King." The right hon. Gentleman had now temporarily put off the ermine, and, presumably in order to avoid guards of honour and Royal salutes, he had gone, so the newspapers said, under the *incognito* of "Mr. Richards," to Egypt where from the summit of the Pyramids forty centuries would contemplate him with some curiosity. [Continued cries of "Oh."] There seemed to be present the neophytes of some new religion who could not bear to hear criticised a person whom they regarded almost as divine. When the right hon. Gentleman reached Egypt and learnt what had occurred in Hertfordshire to his well-beloved and trusty commissioner he would probably revise his opinion and begin to doubt whether so much success was assured to his plan as he had formerly supposed.

So far as the Government was concerned, there had been a series of manifestoes from the First Lord of the Treasury. In his Sheffield speech he affirmed retaliation, but retaliation which was so limited as not to impose a tax on food or raw material, which was not to involve a high and a low tariff system, which was not to lead to a tariff war, and which was only to be carried into effect with the consent of Parliament. To such retaliation no man, free-trader or free-fooder, could have the slightest objection. The rest of the Sheffield speech was a declaration against the taxation of food—and that speech, on the whole, was entirely incompatible and inconsistent with, and contrary to, the Birmingham plan. Since then, further light had been afforded. In October, a most interesting pamphlet, containing the Sheffield speech and other declarations of the Prime Minister, was issued. That pamphlet was preceded by an introduction, which had since been suppressed and withdrawn, and consequently was the more interesting at the present moment. In that introduction the following passages occurred—

> "The Government is agreed as to the proposals which, as a practical policy, are to be put before the electorate at the next general election, *i.e.*, fiscal reform is necessary, and carries with it the liberty, if the threat be unheeded, to effect retaliation. Neither the taxation of food, nor any bolstering up of a home industry, which is failing through natural and legitimate competition, is included in the programme."

That was the official introduction to the official version of the Prime Minister's speech. These words followed—

> ". . . the chief Liberal attack is bound to be directed against those points which are now debatable amongst ourselves. Such attack is fair and to be expected. It can only succeed if we exhibit weakness and folly."

That introduction fully reaffirmed and put the dots on the i's of the Sheffield speech—but it was withdrawn. Why? Who could doubt that it was at the bidding of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham? Then came a change. There was the Bristol speech, in which the Prime Minister said there were to be profound modifications of our fiscal system, and called free-traders "our opponents." Finally, in December last, there appeared at Dulwich a candidate who entirely shared the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who had even given £1,000 to the Tariff Reform League, and who yet received from the Prime Minister a letter with best wishes for his success. Thus the Prime Minister, who since his Sheffield speech had been expected to resist, had seemed rather drawing nearer and nearer to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. They must therefore ask was the Prime Minister for protection or for free trade, or did he aspire to found a matrimonial agency destined to bring about the union of the two? When in the great schism of the fourteenth century, Pope Urban was elected at Rome, and his rival, Pope Clement, at Avignon, the two Popes anathematised and excommunicated each other, and each called the other "Anti-Pope." Who was the Pope here, and who the anti-pope? Were they to pay their allegiance to Urban of Downing Street or to Clement of Birmingham, or were they to take refuge in some union of both in the shape of a mythical "Pope Joan"? The contradictory utterances of the Prime Minister were reflected in the Ministry itself. Lord Salisbury, who denounced "rash policies and doubtful statistics," said—

> "The Government will not be responsible for presenting such a remedy as preference."

The Lord President of the Council stated that—

> "He never would have subscribed to the Government policy if it had included a tax upon food."

and the Postmaster-General had made utterances to the same effect. Yes: they made these statements now, but what would they say when "Mr. Richards" came back? Would not the right hon. Gentleman make short work of the free-traders, and be encouraged to do so by the knowledge that his adherents were in a majority in the Cabinet. Of the views of the Chancellor of the Exchequer there was no doubt whatever. He had publicly expressed his sympathy with the Birmingham plan "in all its branches," he launched at the free-fooders the choicest adjectives in the Birmingham armoury, and he had recently declared that—

> "A time was coming when the country would insist upon the Government giving its attention to this matter."

That time was no doubt coming, but whether the mandate given by the country would be such as the right hon. Gentleman expected was open to question. The hon. Member for Central Bradford, who was a poet as well as a statesman, had compared the Chancellor of the Exchequer to Pitt, and had suggested that in him would be found the pilot that weathered the storm. If the hon. Member had contemplated the Members for West Bristol, Ealing, and Croydon out in the cold, another verse by the same writer might have occurred to him, and he might have added—

> Praise to placeless proud ability
> Let the prudent muse disclaim;
> And sing the Statesman all civility,
> Whom moderate talents raise to fame.

The opinions of the President of the Board of Trade, of the President of the Local Government Board, and of the Irish Secretary were always interesting, but the member of the Cabinet whose opinions were of the most importance in this matter was the Minister who held the purse-strings—the Minister who, if any man, would so manipulate the next Budget as to leave the door open for the preference or protection which was to be the salvation of the country. The right hon. Gentleman would no doubt be heard on this occasion. His promotion had been a most encouraging recognition of unsuspected merit, paralleled only in the examples of Phaeton and Caligula, and doubtless his declarations on the question would not be lacking in positiveness. But what was the result of the debate? The President of the Board of Trade declared that the Government policy was not protection or the taxation of food—although the next day he said he would be glad to see a moderate tax on food—and he added—

> "We are prepared to fight for free trade."

If the right hon. Gentleman was sincere in that declaration he would have to go and have it out on the Nile. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade was frankly protectionist, and the President of the Local Government Board had stated that he—

> "believes in a scheme designed to draw closer the Colonies and the mother country,"

and that—

> "it is in the main a question worth making considerable sacrifices for."

But in the main this was a question of taxing food, and the right hon. Gentleman was in favour of it, and added that it was unbecoming for an English gentleman to remain in a Government when no longer in sympathy with it. Therefore both the right hon. Gentleman and the Government were in sympathy with a proposal involving the taxation of food. Finally the Colonial Secretary had brought matters to a climax by an academic speech on protection which it was unnecessary to recall; so that while protection and food taxes were tremblingly disavowed in one breath they were as tremblingly avowed in another. Those of the Unionist Party who believed in free food held still the views which the Conservative Party had always professed in the past. They were not the heretics; they were the orthodox members of the Party. The Colonial Secretary had stated that the Government would support those who "honestly" supported the Government programme, and also those candidates who were—

> "In favour of the Government policy even though their own opinions go further than it,"

that is to say, go as far as preference and food-taxing. The Government, therefore, were in favour both of those who opposed and of those who favoured a tax on food. But the right hon. Gentleman made a most offensive accentuation of the word "honestly," as though to suggest that in this matter some Unionists were honest and others not—an insinuation unworthy of the Minister who made it, and repelled by those against whom it was directed. What did it come to? Take the case of two Unionists standing again each other for one seat—as at Chippenham—one a food-taxer and the other a free-fooder. If the free-fooder was, in the opinion of the Government, honest, he would get Government support. The food-taxer would get it whether or no. Both would receive such assistance as the central office could give, and all the assistance of the local associations. Both would receive a letter from the Prime Minister wishing each of them success against the other, and, although there was but one seat and one vote, every loyal Conservative would be bound to vote for both candidates! Was ever anything so childish? He had used the word "Government," but was there a Government? Could there be a Government with two contrary minds, unable to control its own members or to adhere for twenty-four hours to its own statements. Was there anything on the Front Ministerial Bench to inspire confidence at home and respect abroad? Could they view with complacency, in a crisis such as had arisen in the Far East, the prospect of the interests of this country being committed to a Government of settled contradictions and unsettled convictions? The Government had neither managed things, administered Departments, nor controlled events. Things had managed them. departments had administered them, events had smothered them. They had not been a Government but only a debauch of power. Therefore those who thought as he did had no choice. Those who felt for the needy to whom the price of bread was of vast importance could not do anything but vote for this Amendment. To vote against it would be giving a vote for dearer food and taxed bread. ["No, no!"] Whether His Majesty's Government might seek again to renew the assurances they had made and recalled and then made again he knew not. For him it was too late. He could be reconciled by no death-bed repentance, and because he believed in cheap and free food it would be his duty to vote for the Amendment. There was more at stake here than free trade or fair trade, or the binding together of the Empire, for beneath all this was the honour of public men and public life. Parties could only be formed by a common conviction, and could only be kept together by confidence on both sides, confidence mutual in leaders and followers. That confidence they had gone far to lose. It had been seriously impaired, and His Majesty's Government appeared to have entirely abandoned those Conservative principles which they set out with, and which he still believed in. The Government might triumph, they would triumph in the division lobby; but when the great appeal came, his belief was that an indignant and honest people would punish those who had abandoned their principles, and justify those who had stood fast to them.

Mr. ELLIOT (Durham): I shall not trespass for more than a very few minutes upon the time of the House. I wish to say that I left the Government because it was perfectly clear that, after the resignation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and the letter of the Prime Minister, to my great sorrow, the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government was going to give his support, and was actually giving his support, to the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. After that, as an honest man, I could not remain on that Bench and be in any way responsible for the financial business of the country. Therefore it was my business to make room for someone else with honest convictions, no doubt able to further the policy to which I, at all events, was strongly opposed. The division we are about to take will be the first occasion when the Parliamentary forces come to a distinct issue upon free trade *versus* protection. We have been told that these are mere phrases used as battle cries, and they have not the precise meaning which ought to be attached to them, and we are told that we should be more particular about our terms. The Prime Minister also tries to rally the country in the cause of fiscal reform. If protection does not mean anything, then what has the right hon. Gentleman to say in regard to fiscal reform? What does that term include, and what does it exclude? My right hon. friend gives us good advice, but "he recks not his own rede." He is bound to be more definite himself in the terms he uses, and this is a matter of considerable importance. I cannot bring myself to believe that this question turns upon the meaning of a phrase. It is perfectly easy to find in the discussion which has been going on expressions and arguments used by the Prime Minister which are in antagonism to the theories and conclusions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. I can find antagonistic passages, and I can set one against the other, but this is no paper war, no question between a pamphlet here and a speech there, but a question as to the action and conduct of the Ministers of the Crown, and whether that has been in support, substantially, of the views which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has put before the country. No one regrets more than I do that the Prime Minister is not here. I regretted leaving the right hon. Gentleman's Government, because I was proud to serve under him. We know the great importance he attaches to Party discipline, and we know that he is actuated by no unworthy motives. But we have to look at the facts for ourselves, and we have to see where we stand. I was under the impression that this was a fiscal debate. When the late Chancellor of the Exchequer left the Government, and I regained my freedom, I had no idea that henceforth that great Department to which we had belonged was to remain silent in a fiscal debate. Why is my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer there, and why is he silent? He is the Chancellor of the Exchequer *ad hoc*, and he was put there not only from the high esteem in which the Prime Minister held him, but because he was known to be in favour of the great scheme which his right hon. relative was laying before the country. We are told by the Prime Minister that that policy is not before the country. Why not? There has been a very important controversy throughout all the by-elections, and I refer to them not merely to mention the results of the poll, but also in order to point out what the country thinks is before it. Any hon. Member who has followed those contests will agree that what the constituencies believe is before the country is the question of protection. It is all very well for the right hon, Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham to tell Londoners to "think Imperially," but when an election contest is on. I find that it is a very long time since elections have been fought upon such parochial interests as those which have been before us at the last few by-elections. The right hon. Gentleman is a great Imperialist in the City of London, but at Birmingham he devotes himself to pearl buttons.

There are some great interests which deserve to be considered as Imperial factors. I will not go into figures at this time of the debate, but I will mention the great shipping and carrying trade. That is a business or trade which, if any business or trade in this country deserves to be called Imperial, is Imperial. Our flag is carried from one end of the earth to the other, and it is responsible for the terrible introduction of imports into this country. Here we see one of the three or four gigantic fallacies on which the proposal for a change in the fiscal system is based. It is a grand fallacy that this country is being ruined by its imports. We hardly need to look at the statistics to know this. We may trust, to a certain extent, to the evidence of our own eyes. For my part, I can only say that if any man looks on the magnificent fleets approaching the ports of London, Glasgow, and Liverpool, and pouring wealth into our docks and wharves from all parts of the world as an element of decay, and if he says that on this account British working men will have nothing to do and that they will have to twiddle their thumbs because of want of employment, then I say to my protectionist friend that he is talking nonsense, and culpable nonsense, which is contradicted by experience and the evidence of his own eyes. Am I to be told that all this is disastrous to the trade of the country? Are we to be told that there is a toll to be paid before these ships come into our docks? Imports are merchandise brought into England because Englishmen are in want of that merchandise. They are not brought in for nothing. I am unable to see disaster to this country in the fact that so much wealth comes in to us and comes in so cheap. I do not wish to go into the merits of a question which is not before us, but I would say one word on the merits of colonial federation. We are all in favour of it. The first essential is that we should build on some rather substantial foundation—something that will be durable. Now, is the putting of a duty on corn that stable foundation on which to build? The 1s. duty on corn was taken off a few months ago. We were told that the duty on corn was to be a fixed charge, and that it was not to be increased. What would happen here is what has happened in other countries. If it remains, it will certainly be increased. It is proposed also that there should be a tax on dairy produce. Can anybody seriously suppose that on such an uncertain basis as that we can construct a perfect system?

As to the position His Majesty's Government propose to take—because that is the real matter which makes our discussion and the vote which will be taken to-night of such great importance—I know that right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench have not held practically the same language. I know that the President of the Board of Trade has not held exactly the same language as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, and I know that an ardent supporter of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham said—

> "We need not give any special attention to the President of the Board of Trade's speech because, after all, it amounts to nothing but an interim report."

Some of us, I believe, on these Benches were inclined to think that my right hon. friend gave solemn pledges for the Government, and said that the Government were not in favour of the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. I hope that any hon. Members who have doubts about it will remember how that speech has been described by a supporter of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and how the Secretary to the Board of Trade has dissociated himself entirely from the language of the President. It is not only the language of members of the Government to which I refer but it is to their conduct as well. When contests have been going on in the country gentlemen have gone down as Government candidates with letters from the Prime Minister in their pockets giving them testimonials as representatives of the Government policy. I am informed that at the present moment a noble Lord who is standing for a seat in Birmingham is going down there to represent the policy of the Government. That noble Lord is a very strong advocate for taxation of food, and he is also, I believe, in favour of a 10 per cent. duty on manufactured goods imported into this country. If any one of the right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench gets up and says, "All this is a mistake, we took that line, but we are taking it no longer, and we are determined to dissociate ourselves from the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham," I should in those circumstances doubt whether I should go into the lobby in favour of the Amendment moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Montrose Burghs; but while they are using their whole influence and power —because it is nothing less than that— to support the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham I shall certainly go against them in the lobby to-night. It is greatly to be deplored that the Prime Minister is not present, and that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham also is not here. I am not one of those who condemn the Front Bench opposite for sticking to its guns. Irrespective of anything they might have to tell us, irrespective of the details of the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and irrespective of all the interest and importance of the two right hon. Gentlemen who are absent, I cannot forget that we are here as the House of Commons and that we have a duty to perform. Though we may deplore the absence of the right hon. Gentlemen we are not absolved and cannot be absolved from putting before the country the views which the House of Commons holds on the important matters now before us. It has had too little to say hitherto in this great controversy. If the debate which has been going on and which has brought out so much ability and eloquence during the last eight days could only have taken place last summer much misfortune would have been avoided, and the Government would have been in a stronger position than they are now. Owing to the absence of discussion they have been sinking deeper and deeper in the gulf of protection. I say it is their doings and they are responsible for this condition. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has now behind him four-fifths of the Conservative forces. The Government should have dissociated themselves from a policy of which they did not approve. They are bound to have a policy on a question of such enormous magnitude. My right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade said "Let it be an open question." I would ask my right hon. friend, if he were present, if he, as a fair-minded man, considered that that represented the situation. Suppose that the most powerful member of any Government next to the Prime Minister left the Government in order to advocate disestablishment, suppose that he won over to himself the caucus, and established a great organisation, suppose that he had been enabled to embark thousands of pounds in the cause and that he had gradually drawn to himself great support, and if the Prime Minister had allowed the regular Party organisation to be at his call, then what would have happened? Does my right hon. friend mean to say it would have been long before questions would have been put to the Front Bench. The Archbishop of Canterbury in another place, and the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich in this House, would have considered it their duty to compel Ministers to speak out, and to find out whether that policy had or had not their support. I believe the Chief Secretary for Ireland is likely to speak this afternoon. I implore him, for the sake of the House of Commons, to do violence to his own nature, and not to make a clever and ingenious speech. I ask that he should use a few simple, straightforward phrases. Do not let us have any more hovering over retaliation. He has got to deal with something other than retaliation. I know that my right hon. friend claimed, I think it was in a speech at Workington, that it is our duty to fearlessly resume our freedom of negotiation. That sounds very great. But, when one looks into the applicability of the circumstances with which we have to deal, we find that there is something less than courage in it. I hope my right hon. friend will not indulge in talk of that kind, but come forward and say whether he is for or against the taxation of food, and a 10 per cent. duty on manufactures, and whether he regards free imports as disastrous to the country. I have had put into my hands a leaflet issued on the authority of the Central Conservative Association deprecating free imports. It says it is a mischievous thing that there should be free imports, and it asks us to substitute a system of reciprocity. That is the way the electors are dealt with at contested elections. I want to know what is being done by agents and candidates and newspapers, and I want to know whether what is being done is or is not repudiated by the right hon. Gentleman.

I am told that the Amendment involves a declaration of want of confidence in the Government. I am bound to say with sorrow, but the most sincere conviction, that my confidence in the fiscal policy of His Majesty's Government is not unlimited. I have no confidence in the fiscal policy of the Government. I see that some of them appear to have no confidence in their own policy. One right hon. Gentleman watches another right hon. Gentleman, and I am told that statements have been made by active representatives of the Government which were in singularly unhappy opposition to each other. We know the position, and the position cannot be altered. It is not a question of words. It is a question of how we are to deal with the facts, and I, for my part, cannot understand how any man who calls himself a free-trader at all, who has any belief in the advantages of free imports, who has any dislike to the system of German and American protection—I do not understand how any such man can hesitate to go into the lobby with the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment.

SIR A. SEALE HASLAM (Newcastle-under-Lyme) said he thought that in the regrettable absence of the Prime Minister this discussion might have been postponed with advantage to the Members of the House. They had been under very serious disadvantages. They knew generally what the views of the Prime Minister were, but they regretted that he was not there to make known his views and answer the arguments that had been put forward. He ventured to say that if the Prime Minister had been present some of the observations made in the House would not have been heard. Speeches had been delivered by politicians and business men, but he regretted that there had not been more of the latter. He had listened with very great pleasure and satisfaction to the speeches of the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich and the hon. Member for Oldham, although he did not agree with them. They were, he thought, not the most competent men to give the best opinion on the subject under discussion. He regretted that these two hon. Members, who were in political partnership, were not in some great business partnership, employing 5,000 men, with their own capital, called upon to compete in the neutral markets of the world, or where protection existed, and where they had no opportunity of trading, or where they would have to face the competition which was recently called "dumping" in this country. He admired the ability of the two hon. Gentlemen and their intellect, but they had not the experience of those who had been engaged in business thirty or forty years, and who knew something of the great trade problems and of the difficulty of finding work for their employees, who knew how men who were only half employed became demoralised, and how men who were wholly out of work became dangerous to the community, how poverty, hunger, and distress roused the worst passions of men. He ventured to say that if all these things were realised by hon. Members they would strengthen the hands of the Government and enable them to do something to improve the state of the nation. If that were the results of the discussion he believed it would not have been in vain.

They had been told that the sum of the imports into and the exports from this country indicated great prosperity, and that these amounted to £900,000,000. They had been told that if our imports exceeded our exports that showed that it was all right. They were told that our imports were paid for either by the goods we exported, or by the sale of securities, or by the services we rendered abroad. But the affairs of a State were very much the same as the affairs of an individual. We had enjoyed in this country an apparent prosperity, and a great deal had been said about our home trade. But had it occurred to any of those Gentlemen that our imports might swell very largely when we were getting into debt on a large scale? He thought that those who compared the state of this country and our indebtedness must feel some curious alarm at the increase of the indebtedness of the nation, whether Imperial or municipal. That indebtedness had increased almost 62 per cent. in the last ten years. He himself could not see how we could reduce the expense on the Navy or the Army; but what was worse, our expense was growing in our municipalities. In Imperial expenditure there was charged to revenue in 1903–4 £144,000,000, and to capital £6,000,000, or a total of £150,000,000; and in 1893–4 the charge to revenue was £91,303,000; and the charge to capital £877,000, or a total of £92,180,000. In municipal expenditure in 1900–1 the charge out of income was £98,180,000; and out of loans £35,533,000, or a total of £133,713,000. In 1890–1 the charge out of income was £62,109,000: and out of loans £8,528,000, or a total of £70,637,000; while the expenditure for 1903–4 was likely to amount to £150,000,000. What were they to learn from that? That they must raise their poundage rates and assessments. If this expenditure was going on the consequences must be serious. If anyone doubted that, look at the price of corporation stock! Some of these stood at 117 ten years ago and were now quoted at 90, and there was a difficulty in selling them at that figure. As our debt had grown our imports had increased. If our imports went on increasing over our exports it was impossible for this country to enjoy the prosperity in the future which she have enjoyed in the past. The existing extravagance must be stopped. There was no doubt that those who had given the closest attention to this subject were begining to realise that if we were to recover our position we should have to work harder and be more economical. A great deal had been said about dumping He employed a large number of men, and he was bound to confess that dumping was at present an advantage to him personally. But he feared that if, in the future, dumping went on, our primary industries would be affected by the competition of the dumped goods. He was a free-trader, and had always been a free-trader, but not a one-sided free-trader. He believed that free trade, so long as it was mutual, was a profit to both sides and an advantage to and promoted the prosperity of each.

A few weeks ago the hon. Member for North-West Durham had come into his constituency and addressed a meeting there. He did not object to the hon. Member going there; it had been a distinct advantage to himself. But he would tell the hon. Member that there was a considerable amount of depression in his constituency, and that there was no use arguing that the state of things was the most perfect ever enjoyed in the country. There were manufacturers who had recently started businesses on the Continent, not because they wanted to do so, or to take work from their workmen, but because the doors in these countries had been closed against their exports. Those were only a few instances of many which he could bring before the House; but they were sufficient to show that the industries which his friends had started on the Continent were distinctly disadvantageous to and would decrease employment in this country. The 60 per cent. duty which was imposed had put an end to trade with the United States, but the worst of it was that the country's best workmen were emigrating to the United States, and were carrying on industries which supplied all the requirements of the American market. The pottery industry was not perhaps one of the largest, but it was one of the most important industries in the country. Its total value was £3,500,000. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North-West Durham said that imports had not seriously affected that industry, but the imports amounted to £750,000, which was a very serious matter in his constituency, as it meant a reduction of between £300,000 and £400,000 per annum in wages. He could quote several other instances to show that the present system was not the best system for the country. With reference to Mr. Cobden, he did not think that anything was to be gained by sneering at him, or by endeavouring to depreciate the magnificent services which he had rendered to the country. He yielded to no man in his admiration of Mr. Cobden, and if he had been a politician at the time he would have voted for Mr. Cobden's policy. But a great many changes had occurred since then, and unfortunately the prophecies of Mr. Cobden had not been verified. Mr. Cobden said that probably within ten years the whole world would follow the example of this country; but, as they now saw, the situation was exactly the reverse. Who would have thought in Mr. Cobden's time that a steamer would carry goods across the Atlantic at 1s. per ton? All the changes which had occurred deserved the most careful attention. Hon. Gentlemen opposite said that the present position of the country was due to free trade, but he thought they ought also to take into account the British mercantile marine, the telegraph and telephone services, and the many other inventions which had contributed to the prosperity of the nation.

If the present free-trade system were continued, it would bring disaster on the industries of the country. He quite agreed that an inquiry was necessary, and an inquiry would shortly take place with the result that a large amount of information would be collected which would be useful to Members on both sides of the House. But whether the inquiry would be sufficiently comprehensive was another matter. Hon. Members might recollect the great discussion which took place years ago with regard to a load-line for ships. As a result a load-line was established, but foreign steamers were allowed to enter British harbours without a load-line, and to trade under conditions which would not be permitted to British vessels. He hoped the Government would take a broad view of the situation, and especially consider the splendid British mercantile marine, which was the admiration of the world, and which had conferred enormous benefit not only on this country but on the world. The British people did not like change. They did not like anything that was new or too ambitious; but a great and mighty force had been introduced into politics, and the time had come when they ought to raise their voices and put forth their strength, and have the courage of their convictions, both in the House of Commons and the country, and make the truth known to people who might have been misled by incorrect figures. He had studied very carefully the speech of the Prime Minister and the pamphlet which he wrote, and he considered that the Prime Minister's views were very moderate. The Prime Minister had only one idea with regard to this question and that was to improve the position of the trade and commerce of the country. He thanked hon. Members very kindly for the manner in which they had listened to the imperfect remarks which he had addressed to the House. They might differ from him as to lines of policy; but his friends opposite respected his views, as was manifested by the manner in which they had listened to him.

*MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): We are now drawing to the close of a debate which, in many of its features, is, I believe, unexampled in the annals of the House of Commons. We are concerned—ostensibly concerned—with an Amendment to the Address on the King's Speech, and I believe it to be the opinion of all impartial onlookers that rarely, if ever, has there been a more one-sided discussion heard within these walls. Some of the ablest and most convincing speeches in support of the Amendment have come from the Government Benches. And what, Sir, has become of the propaganda which has been tearing like a tornado through the country during the whole of the autumn months? It has made a great deal of noise outside, but the air of Westminster, somehow or other, seems to have a sedative effect upon it, and we have heard nothing in the course of this debate but faint and halting and almost apologetic echoes. Still more noteworthy have been the performances of the Ministers of the Crown. Some of them do not seem quite to know their own minds. None of them, so far as I can discover, know the minds of their colleagues. And all of them, when they are hard pressed, to a man take refuge in the undisclosed mind of the Prime Minister. On the first night of the debate the President of the Board of Trade delivered himself of some sound and robust free-trade sentiments, accompanying them no doubt with a plea for the liberty of pious opinion, and a frank confession of his own personal hankerings for some system of preference. Next night he was followed by his subordinate—the Secretary of his own Department—who made an interesting speech. If I might venture, with great respect to the hon. Gentleman, to make one criticism upon it, it would be this—that I think he was unduly liberal in the exercise of a dangerous faculty with which he is endowed, the faculty of stating a fallacy as though it were a truism. However that may be, of one thing there can be no doubt, that the Secretary to the Board of Trade took up, one after another, almost all the most venerable and most vulnerable positions of the most antiquated protectionism. His arguments have been completely disposed of by subsequent speakers on both sides of the House, and I will venture to say by no one with more lucidity, more cogency, or more destructive force than by my hon. friend the Member for Colne Valley (Sir J. Kitson), who, by the way, is, I believe, neither a lawyer nor doctrinaire. Well, the next figure in this strange procession was the President of the Local Government Board, of whom I will say with the utmost personal respect that at the close of his speech, when I tried to speculate upon the precise stage which his convictions had reached, I find myself, and still remain, in impenetrable darkness. Then came the turn of my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the tenor and effect of whose speech I am sure is fresh in the memory of the House. When my right hon. friend, in his picturesque way, compared the hapless British producer face to face with his tariff-clad competitors, to the undisciplined Gaul confronting Cæsar and his legions, I think no one of us was in doubt as to the sphere of influence in which he moved. I shall have something to say in a few minutes in reference to one or two of my right hon. friend's contentions; but before I part company with him now in the most friendly spirit I should like to make one incidental criticism. In the graceful tribute which he paid to the right. hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham he told us that, the more he familiarised himself with the records of his own office, the more he was impressed, not only with the business capacity, but the splendid idealism of his predecessor. This was a very natural and appropiate expression of his feeling; but I could not help thinking that it would have been equally interesting to the House, and perhaps still more relevant to the issue of this debate, if the right hon. Gentleman could have told us that, while ransacking the archives of his Department, he had come across some trace of the missing colonial offer. Friday, so far as the Treasury Bench was concerned, was a day off; but, notwithstanding the absence of the Prime Minister, which we all regret, and whose return to our proceedings will be welcomed with equal warmth in every quarter of the House, there are still Ministers left on that Bench, Cabinet Ministers, whom we have not heard yet. We have not in this debate heard the voice of the Minister primarily responsible for the management of the finances of the country, and it is quite possible that we have not yet come to the end of the process which is described, I believe, in nautical circles as "boxing the compass." He would indeed be a bold man who at this hour of the afternoon would predict with any confidence in what direction it will point at twelve o'clock to-night. Every one knows the lines which are to be found in the immortal description by a too candid friend of one of the greatest orators and thinkers who ever sat in the House—

> "Though fraught with all learning, yet
> straining his throat
> To persuade Tommy Townshend to lend
> him a vote."

Men come and go—I do not see a Burke at this moment on the Treasury Bench—but Parliamentary necessities survive and recur. I cannot help thinking that, if we knew the whole truth of the situation, the real arbiter, more potent even than the Prime Minister, the hidden hand which holds the musical box and turns on the tune every night, is the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury.

There is one figure, as almost every speaker has acknowledged, whom we miss from this discusssion hardly less than that of the Prime Minister himself—I mean, of course, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. In common with everybody, I deplore the cause, and perhaps I may venture to say I have special reason to regret the fact of his absence. Ever since the right hon. Gentleman inaugurated his autumn campaign at Glasgow I have been towards him in the relation of an anxious, pertinacious, and disappointed inquirer. I have respectfully put to him a number of questions—simple questions, direct questions, but questions to which, simple and direct as they were, not the semblance of an answer has yet been vouchsafed. I do not think his absence, much as we regret it, makes it incumbent on me and others to suspend the process of interrogation in this place, which is the only place in the country where antagonistic policies and their spokesmen can meet face to face. The right hon. Gentleman has been described justly as the protagonist of the piece, but he has many able "understudies" in and outside the Government, and there is special reason and special relevance for pressing one or two of these inquiries. Ministers who sit on that Bench may talk about retaliation until the crack of doom—which, I suppose, is another way of describing the next general election—though there does not appear to be a single man among them capable of defining it in intelligible language; but it is not retaliation, but protection; it is not the Sheffield enigma, it is the Birmingham policy which interests, and will continue to interest, the electors of the country. They care little or nothing what the policy or the avowed policy of His Majesty's Goverment may be. I will tell the Government why. Because they have the best reasons for doubting whether the Government as they sit on that Bench are strong enough to have a policy of their own, whether they are strong enough to adhere to it, and, above all, whether they are strong enough to compel the allegiance to it of the Party which sits behind them.

I am not going to rehearse the catalogue of my futile inquiries. I shall confine my interrogations to-night to two points, as to which it appears to me the policy of the right hon. Member for Birmingham and the avowed or official policy of His Majesty's Government rest on common ground. The first question is this. The common assumption which underlies both is that our trade, and especially our trade over sea, exhibits signs, not perhaps of immediate decay, but of imminent and serious danger. Every one knows the now classical phrase of the right hon. Member for Birmingham—the trade of the United Kingdom has been practically stagnant for 30 years. Now, the question I have to ask of those who entertain that view, and make it the basis of the various stages of the policy for fiscal change now before the country, is when and how was this discovery made? I am not going back to ancient history, I am not going back to 1881, to 1885, or even to 1896, I shall come to a date as recent as January, 1902—that is to say, sixteen months before the new crusade was started, and only two years from the time at which we are met here to-night—and I want to ask the attention of the House to some language which was used by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham himself in the city of Birmingham on 6th January, 1902. The House will see in a moment the relevancy of the question I put. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I have lately seen a good deal of discussion in the papers about the crisis in British industry. Well, if the crisis means an imminent and pressing danger, I think the accounts are altogether exaggerated. I see no signs of any imminent or pressing danger to the prosperity of this country. During the last five years"—

That is, within the thirty years—

> "we have enjoyed an absolutely unparalleled condition of trade, and although we cannot expect that this will last for ever, although there are some signs that trade is not so brisk as it was, still, to my mind, the prospects are extremely good, and I am not at all disposed to take a pessimistic view of the situation."

This, at the time when glass was gone, when silk had disappeared, when iron was going, and when wool was threatened! Yes, but the right hon. Gentleman does see some signs of possible danger, and how does he propose it should be met?—

> "In order to keep the trade we have got, in order that we may develop in proportion as our population increases, employers and employed must do their utmost, they must not go backward, they must keep alive to the spirit of the times. . . . Employers have to bring to bear more scientific intelligence to the management of their business."

That is the doctrine of the pedants and lawyers whose testimony is scouted, as we know, by the Secretary of the Board of Trade and other practical men of business. This is the despised Charlottenburg policy—

> "The old rule of thumb methods will not last for ever; and in the presence"—

Of what? tariffs? not at all.

> "of the development of science abroad, it is perfectly certain that we shall suffer seriously, unless our manufacturers take advantage of the opportunities afforded to them to bring the highest theoretical knowledge into combination with practical experience."

Then the right hon. Gentleman goes on to the workman's side of the question and makes a complaint of what he conceives to be the retrograde methods of trades unions. Here is the conclusion of the whole matter, which I adopt as part of my argument. It is the best statement of the case I have ever read—

> "I have ventured to give advice to the employers to take advantage of the opportunities provided for them to develop their brains. I venture to advise the working classes of this country also to take advantage of their special opportunities to develop the product of their labour. If these two conditions are fulfilled, I for one am perfectly confident that there is no fear for the future, no fear that we shall take an inferior position to that of our ancestors, no fear that we shall not meet competition from whatever quarter it comes, that we shall not meet the rivalries of all the world."

I ask the House, in view of these wise and weighty words, uttered not in a remote past, but two years ago, does not the whole of this movement, as far as it is put forward in the supposed interests of domestic trade, assume the aspect of a farce? What has happened since January, 1902? Two years have passed. The right hon. Gentleman himself said in his speech at Liverpool that 1902 was one of the best years British trade had ever known, and 1903 is now known as a record year in the whole history of the industry of this country. ["No."] I am speaking of the Board of Trade Returns, and yet we are now assured from the same quarter, by the same voice, that only by a fiscal revolution, and by a return to the stalest devices of protection, can we preserve our decaying trade, and what is more, our dissolving Empire. The right hon. Gentleman would say, if he were here, that he is entitled to change his views. But what we are protesting against is the assumption which underlies his speeches and those of many of his supporters, that because he has changed his views, therefore the facts of history and the rules of logic and the processes of arithmetic and the very laws of nature herself have undergone a simultaneous and corresponding change. At the Council of Constance the Emperor Sigismund, being pulled up for a false concord in a Latin allocution which he addressed to the assembled prelates, made a reply which is famous in history—*Ego sum Rex Romanorum et supra grammaticam.* I think that a somewhat similar claim is being made for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, only his superiority is alleged to extend over a far wider field than that claimed by the Holy Roman Emperor.

I come to the other point as to which I desire a little further light, and it relates to the proposed import duty of 10 per cent. on manufactures that come from outside. That was originally proposed, as we know, to fill up the hole in the revenue which would be caused by the suggested remissions of taxation on sugar and tea. But it was not a revenue duty.

Why? Because, if it had been, a corresponding Excise duty would have been proposed on the same articles manufactured at home; in other words, it was avowedly a protective duty. If there is one thing that is axiomatic in fiscal theory and practice it is this, that you cannot combine in one and the same imposition a revenue and a protective duty. Just to the extent that it is efficient for one purpose it is inefficient for the other. If it succeeds in bringing in revenue, of course, it fails to protect. On the other hand, if it succeeds in protecting, it follows as a necessary consequence that it does not bring in revenue. Every speaker on the other side has tried to run this duty of 10 per cent. both as one thing and the other. They have really got two horses running in diametrically opposite directions, and they must elect on which saddle they will sit. I was surprised that the Colonial Secretary, in the course of his speech the other night, suggested that the late Liberal Cabinet were prevented from protesting against the protective character of this proposed duty because we had assented to an import duty of 5 per cent. in the Indian tariff. Was that a protective duty? Had my right hon. friend when he made that charge, which is not very relevant to any question in this debate, read the despatch from the Government of India on 22nd October last, included in the Papers lately presented to the House? I will read the words of the Government of India—

> "In respect of imports the Indian tariff, as you are aware, with one or two unimportant exceptions, imposes duties purely for revenue purposes. It is entirely free from any trace of preference and any protective intention."

Neither in fact nor in intention is it protective.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): My statement was made entirely with reference to a remark made by the right hon. Member for the Montrose Burghs, that in agreeing with Mr. Charles Booth that an all-round 5 per cent. duty was a possible matter for discussion at any rate, I subjected myself to be called a protectionist. I said that inasmuch as that was the Indian fiscal system the right hon. Gentleman and all his colleagues were subject to the same imputation.

*MR. ASQUITH: That is exactly what is not the case, and this can be shown by a very simple test. Will Mr. Charles Booth, or my right hon. friend, in so far as he adopts his scheme, agree to the imposition of a corresponding Excise duty on all articles produced in this country on which the 5 per cent. import duty is imposed? That is a fair test.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: It is only on cotton.

*MR. ASQUITH: I recommend the hon. Gentleman to read the despatch; he will find all the information there. Cotton is the most important, but there are many others. I wish to ask one or two questions with reference to this 10 per cent. import duty. Is it intended to apply to colonial as well as to foreign products? Is it intended to be an equal preference for all industries here or a privilege only for some? Agriculture cannot gain any benefit from it at all. What about the cotton trade? We manufacture here every year, partly for export and partly for the home market, £100,000,000 of cotton goods. Our imports are £5,000,000. What about the shipbuilding trade, and the building trade, which employs 1,000,000 of workpeople in this country? No one of these trades can derive any advantage from import duties, while, on the other hand, there are ingredients imported which enter into their manufacturing processes, the cheapness of which is absolutely vital to the successful and profitable carrying on of their work. Iron, steel, leather, oil, and flour will all be increased in price. I say that this duty is unintelligent in conception, unequal in application; it protects one trade, and not only does not protect but penalises another; and, finally, as an instrument of revenue it can only succeed to the extent in which it fails as an instrument of protection.

I should like to deal now with a serious and interesting argument put forward by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. The Colonial Secretary suggested that our factory legislation—legislation for the protection of labour against insanitary conditions—is inconsistent with the doctrine of free trade, that it increases the cost of production here, and therefore justifies a compensatory protection as against other countries. This is a very important point. What I wish to make perfectly clear is our position in this matter. How does my right hon. friend attempt to show any inconsistency between the two things? Only by the assumption that our free-trade system is an affirmation and that our factory laws are a negation of some abstract doctrine of *laissez faire*. That is not the case. The people of this country became free-traders, and will continue to be free-traders, not through the preaching of dogma, but through the teaching of experience. I quite agree with my right hon. friend that some of the early free-traders did not recognise the fact (though it is a great mistake to suppose that Lord Ashley was supported by protectionists only); but the real fact is that our factory legislation and our free-trade system are the proper complements of one another. Why? Because both are necessary to prevent an uneconomic, which means a wasteful, application and distribution of the productive power of the community. Under protection we wasted labour and capital on making things which other people could make better; and under the old factory system of unregulated labour you wasted the lives and strength of the mothers and children of the nation, and by so doing you crippled its productive resources, power and contaminated the very springs of its industrial vitality. It was the part of wise statesmanship to get rid both of the one and of the other. But that is a question of principle. Let us look at the practical application. Does it, as my right hon. friend assumes, increase the cost of production? I absolutely deny it. On the contrary, I assert, and I believe it to be borne out by the experience of every civilised country, that the workman is a more efficient productive instrument, that he does a larger quantity of good work in a given time, if he works under sanitary conditions, with an adequate provision of light air, and ventilation, and with proper safeguards against the risk of injury from machinery and other causes. I say that if the children are sent to school—as, thank Heaven, they are now—in their tender years, instead of being sent to the factory; if the girls and women who work are compelled to observe the special precautions proper to their sex—I say that the extra expense involved is more than repaid by a sounder, more robust, and more intelligent industrial population. My right hon. friend quotes a passage from a speech of mine in which I pointed out that the German workman works longer hours at lower wages, and with an inferior standard of comfort to our own population. That is perfectly true. [An HON. MEMBER: No factory system.] That interruption shows with how much knowledge the hon. Member speaks. The factory code in Germany is more elaborate than our own; and the real reason for the inferior position of the German workman is not a bad factory code, but protection—the shutting out of the free influx of imports and the partial closing of the door of the open market, which raises the cost of living, and therefore cuts down the real remuneration of labour. While I have listened to this discussion I have thought that there was a great deal of force in the suggestion put forward somewhere that we should put together as an enduring monument of the debate a short manual of protection for beginners, the first principles of which should be taken from the speeches of the Colonial Secretary, and the illustrations from the speeches of the Secretary to the Board of Trade. In odd moments I have endeavoured to construct for myself one or two pages of this imaginary catechism, and with the permission of the House I will give a few extracts—

> The first question is, "What is free trade?" And the answer is "A Shibboleth." "By whom was it invented?" "By one Adam Smith, a professor, who had probably never set foot in a factory in his life. A later writer, Carlyle, is a much safer guide." "How, then, did it come to be adopted as part of the policy of this country?" "Through the machinations of a middle-class conspiracy headed by one Cobden, whose main object was to lower the wages of labour." "How has the superstition managed to survive?" "Because there are people simple enough and short-sighted enough to imagine that in foreign trade it is well to receive more than you give." "Can you give a practical illustration of this?" "Since the year 1860 the imports into the United Kingdom have exceeded the exports, according to the Board of Trade Returns, by no less than £4,000,000,000 sterling." "What does that mean? Translate it into terms of wages and employment." "Roughly speaking, the loss in wages to British workmen is £2,000,000,000 sterling." "How then have we

escaped ruin?" "By the mercy of Providence." "And how are we to set ourselves right?" "We must wait for the Report of the Tariff Commission."

I ask, is that a caricature of the arguments that have been used? [Cries of "No, no!"]

As to this topic of retaliation, there are some Gentlemen, I gather, who are going to absolve themselves selves from the duty of voting for the Amendment because they fancy that they can discern in the official policy of retaliation some form of fiscal change which would not involve a return to protection. The right hon. Member for Bristol said pointedly that he was going to support retaliation because it was a step in the opposite direction to protection. I fancy that nine out of every ten of those who support retaliation will be those who support it because they think it is the first and a long step on the road towards protection. We are entitled to come to close quarters with the Government on this subject of retaliation. Hitherto they have avoided all intelligible explanation on a two-fold plea—first, the absence of the Prime Minister, upon which I think no more need be said; and, secondly, the supposed example of Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Gladstone is said to have declined to disclose in advance some of the particulars in his Home Rule Bill, especially the position which the Irish Members were to hold. I can speak freely in this matter, because I was one of those who strongly urged upon Mr. Gladstone publicly that he should make the disclosure. But to compare that with the situation of to-day is to make an enormous draft on the credulity of this House. The real analogy would have been if Mr. Gladstone had asked for a mandate for Home Rule, without saying whether he meant to apply it to Ireland or to Scotland. I will ask the right hon. Gentleman who is to follow me two questions. First, what is the nature and what are the limits of the power which the Government are going to ask the country to confer on them? And, secondly, what is the kind of use which they contemplate making of the power so conferred? The first is a constitutional, and the second is an economic question; and a plain answer to both is essential to a clear understanding of the subject. First as to the power. It is a truism to say that any Minister may at any time come to the House of Commons to ask their assent to any measure, legislative, administrative, or fiscal, for which he has a producible and provable case. But it is said that this power is dormant or is unavailable in fiscal policy owing to inveterate tradition. But is it? This House was elected in 1900. Will anyone pretend that it was part of the mandate given by the electors in 1900 to make any change of any sort or kind in our fiscal system? But what have we done? In the year 1902, without any mandate or demand for further powers, we imposed what many of us believe to be a protective duty on corn, in direct violation of our fiscal traditions for many years past. And in 1903 we took the longest and strongest step that has ever been taken in the direction of this policy of retaliation in the shape of the Sugar Convention. In the face of these facts patent, recent, and notorious, how can any one say—if a case can be made out to the satisfaction of the majority of the House of Commons; and I think a bad case was made out in both those instances—that the Government have not at this moment every power that any constitutional Minister could require? I must press for a more specific answer than we have yet got to the question put by my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition on the first night of the session—If you are not satisfied with that power, that is to say, the power of dealing *ad hoc* with the question as it arises, subject to the assent of the House of Commons, what is the character of the new powers with which you propose to clothe yourselves? They must take the form of some kind of general legislation—it may be subject to restrictions; I do not know what—but that general legislation, if it is to be effectively and practically worked for the objects which the Government profess to have in view, will have, sooner or later, to take the form which it has taken in every foreign protectionist country—of placing in the hands of the Executive a maximum and a minimum tariff and allowing it to apply the one or the other according to the circumstances of the case. We want to know whether that is the proposal which the Government are going to submit to the House. The second question is, What use are you going to make of this power? I want to have presented, what we have not yet had, an actual concrete case. We hear a great deal of talk about conceivable cases, of outrageous injustice and so forth; I want an actual concrete case. Will the right hon. Gentleman give me such a case? Let him give me an outrageous duty in existence now. Tell me by whom it is imposed; whether it is directed primarily or specially against us, or only against us in common with all the other countries in the world with whom the country imposing the duty is in actual or possible competition. Tell me what is the line your reprisals are going to take? Are they to be only against the commodity which the duty in question favours, or are they to be against the whole import trade of the country imposing it?

There is this question of dumping. How are you going to deal with dumping? Take the case of iron, which was taken by the Secretary to the Board of Trade. Is it only against dumped iron—that is, iron sold here at a lower price than in the country of origin—that you are going to retaliate? If so, you may go great lengths; for let us never forget that it is of the essence of protection to sell dear at home and cheap abroad. How are you going to find out whether it is dumped or not? Are you going to put your retaliatory duty on all goods which are sold here cheaper than they are sold in the country in which they are produced? Are you going to put it on, even although the dumping may be the result of the temporary action of a syndicate or combination of producers, or are you only going to put it on when there is a direct bounty given in the country of origin? And in that case, let me ask, are you going to discriminate between our Colonies and foreign countries?

I apologise to the House for enumerating such a series of dry and technical questions, but they are the practical questions upon which the political wisdom and fiscal efficacy of retaliation really depend. I venture to point out once more—as has been pointed out by many hon. Members who have preceded me—first, that in point of fact the countries which have the power of retaliation, and use it, have not fared any better than ourselves in dealing with protected markets: secondly, that you cannot effectively carry out your policy of retaliation, as was admitted by the President of the Board of Trade, against our most serious competitors, or some of them—certainly not against the United States of America—unless you tax both food and raw materials; and, thirdly, that, as all experience shows, the duty which begins by being retaliatory and provisional almost invariably ends by being protective and permanent. I should like before I conclude to give one illustration to the House of the spirit in which it appears to me this power of retaliation is likely to be used if entrusted to the present Government. I could take many, but I will take by way of illustration some words which fell from the Chief Secretary at Edinburgh in the month of November last, the most remarkable speech that I have read in the whole of this discussion. First of all—it is not exactly the point, but it is interesting to note—the right hon. Gentleman deprecated the magnitude of our foreign investments. He said that they were a sign of industrial decay. Why?

"In this country,"

he said,

"any man with £10,000 or £20,000 would hardly ever dream of putting it into any industrial enterprise at all."

I wonder how we manage to live.

"What does he do? He invests it abroad, believing that it is not safe to invest it at home."

That is pretty serious, but, serious as it is, it is nothing to the tragic consequences which the right hon. Gentleman has discovered to flow from the glut of imports. Let me read this passage—

"Great Britain, after sixty years of unmitigated free imports was a good place for drones, but let them not mistake"

I ask particular attention to these words

"let them not mistake the contented lullaby of the surfeited consumer for the busy murmur of the working hive."

Well, in all the rhetoric of the recess, copious and variegated as it has been, this sentence seems to me to be a gem that scintillates with unique and incomparable radiance. "The contented lullaby of the surfeited consumer!" Apart from the context the House might perhaps imagine that this was the picturesque description by a special reporter of the state of things which prevail when the loyal and patriotic toasts are proposed at the conclusion of a civic banquet. No, it is a description by a Minister of the Crown of the condition of British trade in the year 1903. "The busy murmur of the working hive!" It is to be found apparently only in countries with a scientific tariff, while we here, we poor Englishmen and Scotchmen and Irishmen, with our lamentable and pertinacious excess of imports over exports, we are a nation of drones, feeding idly upon the honey which is benevolently and, I presume, gratuitously provided for us by the eccentric foreigner. What does it all mean? Is this House, is this country, going to put the weapon of retaliation into the hands of gentlemen like the Chief Secretary, who think our foreign investments a proof of domestic insecurity, and who regard the magnitude of our imports as the measure of our industrial lethargy? But every argument which the right hon. Gentleman and many of his colleagues have used, when it comes to be analysed and examined, is seen to be an argument not for retaliation, not for any halfway house, not for any intermediate step, but for full-blown and uncompromising protection.

This Amendment of my right hon. friend raises a clear issue. It condemns any return to protective duties, and, in face of the language of Ministers which I have read and criticised, can any one say that such a declaration by the House of Commons is not opportune and indeed urgent? For aught I know we are going to-night—I do not know whether the Chief Secretary or the Home Secretary is to be the transforming hand—we are going to have another tilt of the see-saw, possibly renewed assurances of the unshaken devotion of the Government to the principles of free trade. Sir, I venture to say to the House that the question whether the present Ministers are safe custodians of the citadel of free trade is a question which cannot be settled by the utterances of perturbed and bewildered Ministers in the throes of a Parliamentary crisis. You must look to their whole conduct and attitude since the controversy was raised nine months ago—the period of unsettled convictions, the so-called inquiry, the Prime Minister's benediction to the departing missionary, the open patronage which has been extended to the propaganda of the autumn, the promises which have been given even in this debate of electoral support to its adherents. I submit to the House that it is not to such hands as these that the fortunes of free trade can safely be committed. For my part I think that the Government have been guilty of the vulgar error of being too clever by half. They have played, or tried to play, a game which in the long run never succeeds with the people of this country, a game of manœuvre and mystification. Ever since last May they have been trifling with the nation, just as to-night they are trying to trifle with the House of Commons. What up to now has been the result of a policy so alien to the best traditions of our public life? One has only got to look opposite to see—a discredited Ministry and a divided Party. The country is showing by evidence which cannot be misinterpreted—the last instalment came no later than two days ago from a hitherto impregnable stronghold of Toryism—the country is showing that it realises that in this matter there is one issue and only one, the issue between free trade upon the one side and protection upon the other. That issue is presented to this House to-night; let it by its vote anticipate the verdict of the nation.

*THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): Before the speech was delivered to which I have to reply, a request was made to me by my hon. friend the Member for Durham with which I can very easily comply—namely, that I should not be ingenious and clever in my reply. I shall speak directly on the subject which I believe to be before this House, and I draw the attention of my hon. friend to the fact that, whatever else it may have been—eloquent and forcible as his speeches always are—the speech to which we have just listened from the right hon. Gentleman was chiefly characterised by its cleverness and by its ingenuity, with the purpose, ably followed from start to finish, of drawing me away from answering the request made to me by the hon. Gentleman, of distracting the attention of my hon. friend from the issue which is before the House, and of putting into everybody's mind the idea that we are debating the merits of protection against free trade. He dismissed the Amendment in the opening sentence, and towards the close of his speech he culled perhaps a too gaudy flower of rhetoric which decorated one of my own deliverances. I am not, however, going to be drawn into repeating or defending speeches which I have made [Ironical OPPOSITION cheers], and I am not to be deterred by ironical cheers from speaking as a Minister for my colleagues in definition and in defence of the policy of the Government. I repudiate altogether the absurd interpretation which the right hon. Gentleman has placed on my Edinburgh speech. Are we to be debarred from remarking on the emigration of British capital? Why, Mill himself puts it in the very forefront of his chapter on the taxation of commodities, and points out as one matter which ought to be considered in any inquiry into the working of taxation that with low profits the tendency of British capital will be more and more to go into foreign investments or to be swept away, and he prophesied that that would be the future tendency. I do not accept the interpretation placed by the right hon. Gentleman on my Edinburgh speech, or on many speeches which have been made in this House; but what has become of the anxiety of the mover of this Amendment for British trade? The right hon. and learned Member at an earlier period of his speech invited me if I followed him to defend, not only the policy, but the speeches of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham and he quoted a speech of two years ago—I only touch upon these questions because he made it a point against the Government—and asked us, "When did you become uneasy over the state of British Trade?" I will take up that point. I will give another quotation out of that speech, and beg my hon. friends to listen to it—

> "We are face to face with a tremendous and strenuous competition; we have to hold our own against other nations, not too friendly; and it is for us a first necessity that we should find new markets and develop them, and that we should keep open old markets. If other nations were as liberal as we are in our commercial relations the burden would be much less."

Is there, I ask, any justification for the view which the right hon. Member has tried to impose upon the intelligence of my hon. friends that we have raised this question as a mere electioneering cry, and that we are not deeply concerned for the future prospects of British trade? The policy of the Government—and I had better state it in a manner which I think befits the statement of a policy not before the country, but announced as being the policy which the Government will submit to the electorate, that is to say in its broad outlines, but without any doubt in the terms which I use or any possibility of the words I use being susceptible of doubtful interpretation. The Government does ask this country that we should resume the freedom of negotiation for the purpose of attaining commercial advantages, which as a matter of historic fact has not been in the hands of any Government since the year 1860. We say that, in the event of such negotiations proving abortive, there must be an effective sanction behind those negotiations, we say that that sanction ought not to be used and will not be used by us except subject to the effective control of the House of Commons over the financial policy of this country. We also add that it should be liberated from the rigour of traditional restriction which has, as a matter of fact, strangled every diplomatic effort we have made and notoriously prevented a commercial arrangement with France, to effect which M. Léon Say came to this country as Ambassador in 1880. What ground have the Government advanced for asking that this new departure should be made? The first reason which we have advanced is that there is a growing uneasiness over the condition of British trade in relation to the trade of other countries. Are hon. Gentlemen opposite free from any anxiety upon that score? Why does the mover of this Amendment abide in this House by words which he has used in the country and still say, as I believe he does, that it is a matter of vital necessity to us that other countries should come round to the policy of the open door? Are we to attach no importance to the fact? I am taunted by the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken with attaching no importance to the imports which come into Great Britain. There is no foundation for such a taunt, but if we are not only to accept the speeches made from hon. Members opposite, but to take note also of the reception with which certain remarks have met, we might say they think that exports from this country are of no value to this country. Look at the travesty of argument in which the right hon. Gentleman has thought fit to indulge. It is a fact that the average value of the exports per head of this country has not risen in recent years. It is a fact that by comparison with other countries, if we look more particularly to the export of manufactured articles, we can show for this country no elasticity at all comparable with that which has been exhibited by other countries. It is a fact, if we look at the distribution of the exports from this country, that they are suffering because of hostile tariffs. That is asserted in the Blue-book to which so much reference has been made. Upon page 16 of that Blue-book occur the words—

> "There can be no doubt as to the effect of these hostile tariffs in checking the export trade of this country."

The right hon. Gentleman declares that in my opinion imports are of no value. I have never said anything of the kind. Imports are of enormous value. In that very speech at Edinburgh I took pride in the amount of our imports, but what I did say was that if the amount of our imports continued to increase that was no consolation for stagnation and lack of elasticity in our exports. I held then, and hold now, and the Government hold, that it is not wise to look only to returns from your investments abroad, and because they are great, and you are glad they are great, to take no account of this lack of rebound and lack of progress in your export trade. Then it is legitimate, holding that view — the view which has been announced only recently by the Duke of Devonshire, who said—

> "The existing tariffs of other nations have inflicted, and do inflict, great injuries upon some of our fellow-citizens"—

to look for a remedy? Is the remedy which we advocate of too drastic a character for the difficulties with which this country is confronted? I recollect very well a significant criticism that was passed upon the late Lord Salisbury for having failed to protect the cotton trade of this country with Madagascar. At that time the value of our cotton exports to Madagascar fell in consequence of the French annexation from £116,000 to £6,000 worth. Lord Salisbury was criticised because that result had not been averted. How could it have been averted? By diplomatic representations? If they had failed the sanction in that case would be war. May not a similar object be sought by diplomatic negotiations, and must not those negotiations have a sanction—not the terrible sanction of war, but the sanction of imposing some duties upon imports from other countries which will make them realise that we are entitled to some consideration at their hands? I welcome this debate chiefly because it has revealed the fact that there is already a deep line of demarcation between hon. Gentlemen opposite and those of us who sit upon these Benches. What is their attitude towards the injuries which have been inflicted on the trade of this country, and what is their attitude towards the remedy we recommend to the country? Do they think it suitable to the occasion to call any Member who speaks from this Bench a protectionist if he recites the facts and the figures which could alone justify the pessimism of the right hon. Gentleman who moved this Amendment? They avoid, except in the concluding words of the speech to which we have just listened, any criticism of the policy of the Government, and almost exclusively confine their attacks to the policy which has been promulgated by my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham. I was asked in a speech delivered this afternoon to state categorically what are my views on a 10 per cent. duty all round, or an average duty of 10 per cent, That is no part of the policy of the Government.

Sir, almost the only speech which has in the course of this debate been directed to attacking the policy of the Government was the speech, the very able and witty speech, of the hon. Member for Carnarvon. It opened with a coruscating shower of jests, but it was the only speech really delivered against the policy of the

Government, and it was not a criticism of the speeches of those who have left the Government; but when he came to the policy of retaliation his objection to it was this. If you bring any pressure to bear on Germany, for instance, Germany will hit us back. We now suffer, without naming any particular country, from hostile tariffs ranging from 25 per cent. in the case of Germany to 75 per cent. in the case of the United States and 131 per cent. in the case of Russia. We suffer from these hostile tariffs. We are being hit by them; and are we to be told that we are to make no diplomatic representations on these points? The hon. Member concluded that part of his speech by saying that the protectionists are the funkers. What is to be said of those who will not stand up for the interests of their fellow-subjects against another Power? Here is Germany who will hit back, and, indeed, I scarcely exaggerate when I declare that we are being warned off even looking into the damage inflicted by these hostile tariffs lest we should be seized with the temptation to deal with them. We are not to inquire. We are not to hit back. This country, in fact, is to be cast in the dignified rôle of playing in a sort of combination between running the gauntlet and blind man's buff. We alone are to wear the bandage, and we are to accept the stripes. I agree that the policy of retaliation would be futile in the hands of hon. Gentlemen like the hon. Member for Carnarvon or right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I agree in that because we can very well forecast the way in which they would use such a weapon from the speeches they have made in the course of this debate and from the reception given by them to other speeches. When my right hon. friend the Member for Croydon said that retaliation was not theoretically unsound, there was not a cheer from the Opposition, and when he went on to declare that the tin-plate trade had been severely injured and for a time destroyed by hostile tariffs—dead silence. When he ventured to apply the epithet "barbarous" to a tariff of 131 per cent. *ad valorem* against the exports of this country an uneasy expression of dissent began to make itself heard on the Benches opposite; but when he, or, more notably, the right hon. Baronet who sits for Berwick, went on to explain at great length that negotiations for the purpose of securing greater advantages were extremely difficult, that retaliation was a perplexing, a forbidding policy, why then our political antagonists cheered up, and when the argument was developed, and we were told that, even if we surmounted those difficulties and did apply retaliation, we should inflict a greater injury on ourselves than on the nation with whom we were negotiating, then they burst into transports of joy. Therefore I am justified in saying that such a weapon would be a somewhat futile equipment in the hands of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen, in order to show how difficult such a matter would be of accomplishment, stated that no Government would, or should, move any duty up or down—and I mark that—without the authority of Parliament. More than that, that it would not enter into any engagements to move a duty up or down without the authority of Parliament. Then does the right hon. Gentleman condemn the Cobden treaty? I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that no Government ought to enter into any engagement which would end in putting a duty up or down without the authorisation of Parliament. Now that is a very important point, and I take it up because the question was put deliberately to me by the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last. Of course, a Government entering into diplomatic negotiations must be at liberty to state what it will do in certain events, but the treaty arrived at will be subject to the control of this House if the effective control of Parliament if the financial policy of this country is to be preserved. In the case of the Cobden treaty the negotiations took place in the year before—1859—and in the "Life of Mr. Gladstone" written by the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment we read that there was some perturbation in the Cabinet over this project of entering into negotiations for altering certain duties without the knowledge of Parliament. But these fears did not weigh with the Cabinet of the day and the treaty was concluded, and what was the result? Why, in, I think, Mr. Gladstone's words, France was persuaded to lower her duties on a number of articles of British production and export, and more especially on iron, which Cobden called the daily bread of other industries. If it was legitimate—and it was legitimate—in 1860 for the Cabinet without the knowlege of Parliament to enter into diplomatic relations with another country and to state that it was the policy of that Government to alter certain duties and thereby get a reduction of duties on articles of British production and export, is it illegitimate to-day to do the same thing? [HON. MEMBERS: "No"] It is not illegitimate. Then are we to understand that it was legitimate to repeal those duties and that it is not legitimate to say that unless you are met in a fair manner you will impose duties? Because that is what the policy of the Government proposes to do. We shall proceed with negotiations. I may say, in order to reply to the right. hon Gentleman, that negotiations are likely to be embarrassed if, before negotiation begins, Ministers are asked to state, step by step, all the arguments that will be used. Negotiations begin with nothing more than a bland smile and a warm welcome, and they are embarrassed if any further indications are given; and certainly, when I am speaking for a Government which believes in a policy of retaliation and intend to take up that policy in earnest, I shall not be drawn away by the questions of the right hon. Gentleman, and unfold to him an imaginative forecast of the exact language which Lord Lansdowne may or may not use in three or four years' time with this or that country.

Either the House trusts the Government or it does not trust the Government. This is not a speculative debate upon the comparative virtues of free trade and vices of protection. It is a vote of no confidence. We should be going very far in a debate on the Address in reply to the Gracious Speech from the Throne if we came down to the House and stated what a policy will include which is only going to be submitted to the country at the next general election. Sir, is it or is it not desirable that steps should be taken to abate the hostile tariffs which are imposed against the exports of this country? Is that a matter of real neccessity or is it not? A great many of us are in agreement, in closer agreement than some suppose, upon many aspects of this problem. We are all agreed that this country must import every year a great deal of food and a great deal of raw material. We are agreed, not so closely, but still very closely, that, in addition to the enormous money value of food and raw material, we must import into this country many appliances for saving labour and many half-manufactured articles and so forth, and that we must pay for these imports. How are we to pay for them? Very largely by our exports, if not wholly. Then we have to place our exports, and having placed these exports, being obliged by the very geographical peculiarities of this country to place these exports in order to get the imports, is it or is it not a cruel disadvantage to this country that outrageous tariffs should be imposed against them? I know there are fanatics in this matter. I know it, because there are some people who seem to think that a very high tariff is an advantage to the country against whose goods it is imposed—that it does so much harm to the country which puts it on as to be comparatively an advantage to the country on which it is imposed. We all know that the exporting country has to pay a certain amount of these duties. I have said there are some fanatics. Will they accept "Mill's Study of Political Economy" in a matter of that kind? He says those are right who say that a portion of an export duty is paid by the country bringing in the imports. That was his opinion, and that is the opinion of the Government. In any case, we believe that a tariff of 73 per cent., or 25 per cent., or 30 per cent. against the articles we must export places a tax on the whole of our community. It cuts down the profits of our manufacturers, and tends to lower the wages of the working classes. That is the reason, the first reason, which we advance for asking the country to authorise the resumption of freedom in our commercial negotiations. But we have a second reason, also announced by the Prime Minister, and that was that the sense of our helplessness was being borne in upon our minds in the face of any repetition of such a menace as that which was directed to Canada at the hands of the German Government.

We held, and we do hold, that the right of retalaition will prevent the repetition of any such menace. I have said what the policy of the Government includes. I was invited by my hon. friend the Member for Durham to define our policy not only inclusively but exclusively and not to make a rhetorical speech. no one will accuse me of doing that—but to give a straight answer to the straight question which he has put. Well, Sir, the policy of the Government does not include taxation for the mere purpose of fostering home industries which are subjected to legitimate competition. I am asked what about dumping. Is that legitimate competition? I am not going to make a speech about dumping, we know that it inflicts a severe injury upon many classes in this population, we know that beyond the injury it inflicts it aggravates the sense of injury; it aggravates the feeling of antagonism fomented throughout this country against the treatment which we receive from other countries, and we say, and we know, that the process of dumping is facilitated by the erection of high tariff walls, and therefore to those who complain, and naturally and legitimately complain, of dumping, we say that our remedy will bring them some redress, that if retaliation leads, as we believe it will lead, to the lowering of tariff walls, then the evil of dumping will also be mitigated. And I will say no more on the subject of large taxes imposed for the protection of manufacturers. It is not part of the policy of His Majesty's Government. The policy of the Government does not include a preferential system of trade with our colonies involving the taxation of food or raw material.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): Does it exclude?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I am not playing with words. I hear an hon. Gentleman say "What about the Colonial Secretary?" I am stating the position of the Government upon this matter, and I hold that the eloquent speech of my right hon. friend stands in no need of apology or of explanation. He says, as every man who has spoken from this Bench has said, that the policy of the Government did not include preferential trade with our Colonies involving taxation of food. This has been said by the Prime Minister again and again and by every one of his colleagues who has spoken from this Bench. But are Members therefore not at liberty to safeguard this country against the misinterpretation, for that is what it comes to? Having to define our policy I do deprecate the use of any language in this House which can be heard in our colonies and, above all, in Canada, to mean that we are insensible to what my right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol called the enormous value of the sentiment which underlies the idea of colonial preference. I deprecate the use of any such language, and I would even say to the right hon. Gentleman opposite that I was sorry to read his reference to the "so-called" preference in Canada. He ought not to look such a gift horse in the mouth.

MR. ASQUITH: I was quoting the language used by the late Colonial Secretary at the Conference.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I am not aware that the late Colonial Secretary ever applied the phrase "so-called" to the Canadian preference, and what I refer to is the application of this epithet to the colonial preference, which I regret, and which is liable to be misinterpreted by Canada. That preference has been of great value to trade. Sir, not only do I deprecate the use of language which might be misunderstood in our Colonies, but I say that we should also use language which will avoid any chance of misapprehension here, and if such a course was legitimate in a Member of the House it is above all legitimate in a member of the Cabinet who is pledged to exclude colonial preference not only as a policy for this year but as a policy which it will submit to the country at the next election. I am not therefore to be drawn into attacks made upon my right hon. friend for the speech which he delivered. We are concerned to lay down a policy which the Government will propose before the next election; that is our duty, and if I may say so, our attitude towards colonial preference, and our attitude also consists in not including in the policy of the Government, but in avoiding any language which would give umbrage to colonial sentiment. Well, that Sir, again will bring us to the deep line of demarcation which now, as a rule, exists between the Benches opposite and these Benches. We do not make jokes and indulge in gibes about Imperial dumping; for my part if Canada places goods on our market in a manner that would be resented if so placed by another country; I would not look too curiously on that. I should distinguish between the blood relation and the keen business competitor. I should say that the methods of suasion which hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite advocate for all countries are appropriate methods for brother members in the British Empire; but that we at any rate, decline to regard the Colonies as in all matters upon exactly the same basis as foreign competitors. If we talk about the Throne and the Flag that is supposed to be high-falutin' and rhodomontade, but we have a Foreign Office for the Colonies as well as ourselves, an Army and Navy; is it not absurd to incur those heavy expenses for these common services, and then to say that in matters of trade you are only entitled to treat your colonies as foreign competitors? No preference to the Colonies involving taxation of food or of raw materials, but I hope now and ever in this country the warmest possible feeling towards the Colonies, the greatest gratitude for the sacrifice they have made in a common cause.

Time presses, but if I may I would come for a moment to the Amendment which is before us in order to consider its real import. I hope I have been right in stating the policy of the Government; I have stated it with all the amplitude which can reasonably be demanded of me, when I am dealing not with the details of a policy which is not before the House, but with the broad outline and direction of the policy which will be submitted to the country. I have stated it with all the precision that can be reasonably asked for if I am not to embarrass the course of future negotiation and discount the value of the sanction which may be obtained for that negotiation. Consider what this Amendment is. Its first proposition is a vote of censure dressed up to make that fact appear less apparent than it is. The second proposition is a historical judgment; very interesting I daresay to historical societies, but not so interesting to us. The third proposition is a statement of economic belief. We are not the Cobden Club. The first proposition and the first alone contains a censure; it throws upon us the onus of destroying and impairing the value of contributions which hon. Gentlemen would otherwise make to the discussion of the Budget which they have not seen and which they know on the word of the Prime Minister will deviate by not one jot from the settled condition and practice of the last quarter of a century. It is absurd to ask us to consider that Amendment in any other light than as a blow aimed at the heart of the Unionist Party. Let my hon. friends really gauge the proposal, which is a most ridiculous proposal; we are told that only one of two courses is consonant with the honour and dignity of His Majesty's Ministers; the first alternative course consistent with their honour and dignity is to embrace in their official policy all the views, no matter how divergent, which have been expressed by any members of their Party on contingencies which have not arisen and some of which cannot be foreseen; and the other alternative, apparently consistent with honour and dignity, is to take the one definite issue and then excommunicate by court-martial any member of their Party who holds views in excess of that policy, believing in the desirability and feasibility of issues which are beyond and outside the Government programme. Sir, if that is the advice we ought to take, its inherent absurdity is heightened when we consider the quarter from whence it comes. It is offered to us by the only political Party which, so far as I know in the whole political history of this country from the days of King Edward I., has tried both these policies; they tried the first—the policy of the inclusion of divergent and incompatible views—when they hammered together the Newcastle programme, and we know the result. The second policy of unnecessary prescription was tried during the later phases of the late South African War, and they are now during this debate thinking to escape from the consequences of that policy by the transparent device of this debating society Amendment.

We here as Ministers to-day accept, we endorse, we intend to prosecute, the Prime Minister's policy of resuming our freedom of commercial negotiation. We insist that this country, with the greatest trade of any country in the world—I admit it, I glory in it—should no longer suffer herself to be ignored in the reciprocal treaties made by foreign nations, to the material advantage of their commerce and at the sole expense of her own. Our leader is not here; I do not complain that our opponents have been so impetuous as to bring on this Motion in his absence; his presence is not necessary in order that a clear declaration may be made of the policy of the Government; but, as one of his followers who can speak for every colleague in the Administration in or out of the Cabinet, and speaking, I believe, at any rate for the great majority of those who, to use a time-worn phrase, "have acted with us" in recent years, in dark and difficult times during the war, in arduous Parliamentary struggles over the Education Bill—I say I believe the great majority of them will echo our leader's dictum, and so long as he will lead they will loyally follow. Though I have noted with party regret, and with infinite personal regret, that there are some Members on this side of the House who seem bent on action which may result in the irrevocable severance of ties which have long bound us and the obliteration of memories and obligations which we have all incurred in the service of a most kind, most candid, adroit, and courageous leader, who is not here to-night to speak for himself, the main body of the Unionist Party will, I believe, within the limits he has laid down, follow him in his fight for freer trade. I have not given way to a temptation to which many a man in my position might have yielded. I have not sought to prove there are no difficulties in the way of some of my hon. friends, but I do say that to my mind they are difficulties more apparent than real; no, I have stated the policy of the Government frankly, and have not disguised the fact that it involves a great departure—a great departure, not from the doctrines of free trade, but from the routine of Budget-making and the consequent futility of every diplomatic effort on behalf of the commerce of the country. The departure is a great one, great in itself and greater by contrast with the intrenched obstinacy of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. Its magnitude may be measured by the rigidity of all, the pedantry of some, and the fanaticism of a few, who cling to every defect and disadvantage of a system, not of theoretic truth, but of empirical tradition never enjoined by the founders of free trade, and incompatible with the changing conditions of the world.

*Mr. REA (Gloucester) supported the Amendment as a "hardened and convicted" free importer, although he was connected with an industry which, if it was not yet to be numbered with the British industries that had gone, was one of those which, according to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, were going, viz., the distressful industry of British shipping. To the Liverpool shipowners the right hon. Gentleman described the condition to which it had been reduced, and he asked in anxious tones—

> "How long shall we keep it? How much shall we keep of it? Now my case is that British shipping, admirable as its condition is in many respects, is not progressing so fast as foreign shipping, and I do not like that symptom at all."

And what proof did the right hon. Gentleman give of his dismal description? The only official figures he quoted were these—that, while the tonnage of British ships had increased between 1890 and 1901 by 1,400,000, the tonnage of the rest of the world had increased by no less than 2,200,000. His case was that we had failed, not to hold our own, not that we failed to increase very greatly, but that in these years we had failed to accomplish so great an increase as that of the whole of the rest of the world put together. We had increased fourteen, and all the world beside us put together had increased twenty-two. Would this be a result to be ashamed of, if it were true even, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham stated it? But his figures required to be examined, for, though quite accurate, they were curiously misleading. In this single case the right hon. Gentleman suddenly substituted the whole British Empire for the United Kingdom. However much he might belittle these islands—he was not in the habit of speaking disrespectfully of the British Empire—but suddenly in this case he substituted the term "the whole British Empire" for the United Kingdom, and said, "the total increase in the tonnage of the whole British Empire was only 1,400,000." What would anyone who had heard or read those words understand, except that the United Kingdom was going under so fast that even her young and growing Colonies failed to keep her afloat? But why did the right hon. Gentleman substitute "British Empire" for "United Kingdom?" Looking at the figures only one reason could be seen, viz., that he wished to conceal the real progress of the shipping of our country. The truth, on the authority of that same Blue-book quoted by the right hon. Gentleman, was that the increase of tonnage of this country, the United Kingdom alone, was not less than 1,400,000, but actually 1,629,882, and that he had slipped into his account to our debit, by a sudden change of phrase, a loss of tonnage by Canada of 300,000 tons, caused by the decay of her wooden ships. Such was the fact. The shipping of this country had increased in the years mentioned, not by 1,400,000 tons, but by 1,629,882. Then to deal with the other figure; the ships of all the rest of the world had increased 2,200,000 tons. That by itself was not quite true. The increase in the rest of the world was not 2,200,000, but a little over 2,100,000 tons. That, however, was a small point. Of more importance was the fact that in those years a new maritime nation—Japan—had been born, and included in the tables for the first time. She had created a mercantile fleet of nearly a 1,000,000 tons, not out of legitimate commerce, but out of her national resources. Take out Japan, which was a phenomenon apart, and what did they find? Why, that all the States of Europe put together, with the United States of America thrown in, had increased their ocean-going shipping by only 1,200,000 tons, while we had increased ours by 1,600,000, or 30 per cent. more than the lot of them put together. He had not picked out any years such as the year of glorious memory, 1872. These years were of the right hon. Gentleman's own selection. And yet in the face of these facts, to be found in the very same page of the Blue-book, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham asked—

> "What is the use of saying that the house is still standing if you know that there is rot at the foundations? What is the use of saying we are doing very well, when you know we are doing comparatively worse every year?—when you know that behind you you have galloping up at a greater rate than anything you can command your bitterest and severest competitors and rivals?"

"Our bitterest and severest rivals!" How did we stand in relation to these? While our tonnage had increased by 1,600,000, that of France has not increased 200,000, and that of Italy by about the same amount. Norway, which, in the earlier year was the second largest ship-owning State, had decreased by 250,000 tons, and the United States of America by 50,000 tons. The only nation that could claim to be even a bad second to Great Britain was Germany, with her increase of 600,000 tons. Her increase was more than that of all the other countries put together. Why was this? Why was it that during the recent depression in Germany we were told by one of our Consuls that the shipbuilding industry was the last to suffer? The answer was that amid the arid desert of German protection the shipping and shipbuilding industry was a little oasis of free trade. Free imports for the German shipbuilder was the law. From the laying down of the keel to the launch, and from the launch to the trial trip, from the first steel plate and angle to the chronometer and the table napkins—everything for a ship was free in Germany. Germany, so far as shipping and shipbuilding were concerned, made the best of both worlds, the free trade world and the protectionist world. He had stated these facts not for the sake of vulgar boasting, but that the House might consider how the position of shipping would be affected by a policy of national and systematic retaliation—by a policy of protection. The light-hearted manner in which members and supporters of the Government talked of an avowed policy of systematic retaliation was, to his mind, simply astounding. A policy of retaliation must be directed first and foremost against the United States of America, because they were the greatest offenders in the matter of tariff, and because they were the largest exporters to this country. Retaliation not aimed at the United States would be a policy self-stultified. But this was a game in which all the trumps were in the hands of the other party—for the simple reason that America could live very comfortably without us, but we could not live without her. How would America meet any act she considered hostile? We were not left in doubt; her weapon was already forged and tempered, and it was directed against British shipping. Revised Statute 2,502, passed by Congress on 27th August, 1894 (Section 14), was as follows—

> "A discriminating duty of 10 per cent. *ad valorem*, in addition to the duties imposed by law, shall be levied, collected, and paid on all goods, wares, or merchandise which shall be imported in vessels not of the United States; but this discriminating duty shall not apply to goods, wares, and merchandise which shall be imported in vessels not of the United States, entitled by treaty or any Act of Congress to be entered in the ports of the United States on payment of the same duties as shall then be paid on goods, wares, and merchandise imported in vessels of the United States."

We were at present in the position of being entitled by treaty to most-favoured-nation treatment. But if those relations were altered this provision would automatically come into play.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [8th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

> "At the end of the Question, to add the words. 'But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers. We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being.'"—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. REA, continuing his speech, said—If we began a tariff war by an act, not of a general tariff, but of special retaliation, automatically the shipping interest must suffer. Who would in such circumstances send goods to America in a British ship, if a French, or German, or Italian, or Norwegian could be obtained? A blow at British shipping was the most obvious, the easiest, the least dislocating to the strikers of any available. In any tariff war, it might be taken as certain, in his opinion, that the shipping trade, like Uriah of old, would be put in the front of the battle. But if a policy of retaliation threatened danger to shipping, a policy of protection would be its ruin. What had built up this trade to be the most important and valuable branch of our commercial activities? Doubtless coal mining employed more men, and our railways had a capital more than five times as great as that invested in ships, but the annual gross earnings of our mercantile marine were about equal to the gross earnings of all our railways put together, which amounted to £106,000,000 in 1902; and considerably more than the value of the total product of our largest manufacture—cotton—which was estimated at £90,000,000. What had built up this great trade? He did not underestimate the energy and genius of the many distinguished men who had contributed to erect this imposing structure, or the national aptitude of our race, and our character, as an island people, but, after all, we were not quite so superior to the rest of the world in energy and enterprise and education as we are in shipping tonnage. There must be other and special causes for this extraordinary and overwhelming superiority in a trade which all nations of the earth most desire. In his opinion, there was not one cause only, but two, that had contributed to it equally. First, our own free-trade policy, and second, but not less, the protectionist policy of our neighbours. They had flung away their chances of competing with us on equal terms on the open ocean, where we were all equal. It was the foreign tariffs of other nations that had checked our exports of what protectionists called our staple manufactures, and forced us to send them their payments for our imports, and forced them, by the operation of the inflexible laws that govern the international exchange of products, and the financial laws that governed foreign exchange, to receive payment for their goods so largely in the form of the services of our ships. He did not think it was we who suffered most from the substitution. No intelligent English shipowner, looking at the question from the selfish interest of his craft, could favour a return to a policy of protection for ourselves, however much he might desire other nations to continue in the error of their ways. He believed in a theory which the Prime Minister described as—

> "So perverse that it is impossible that any human being can hold it."

A theory, which, if he had been in the House during this debate, he would have found, to his surprise, to be largely held by free-traders on both sides of the House. The theory was this, that we, a free-trade nation, surrounded by protectionist nations, had so adapted ourselves to our protectionist environment, that we actually thrive in it. This he believed to be our case. He believed American and German protection to be bad for the world at large; and, in their present advanced industrial conditions, at any rate, to be bad for America and Germany in particular; but he was by no means sure they were bad for this country in particular.

MR. GUEST (Plymouth) said he should have distrusted this policy much less if it had been put forward by the Board of Trade instead of by the Colonial Office. He had not been convinced either by the idealism of the Colonial Secretary or the realism of the Secretary to the Board of Trade, and he believed it was possible to take a saner and more humane view of our Imperial destiny than that taken by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. They had had from the President of the Board of Trade and the Chief Secretary for Ireland two remarkable speeches, which appeared to him to be encouraging. But it must be apparent to everybody that there was a very grave discrepancy between those two speeches and the performance of the Government. The President of the Board of Trade declared, in plain and well-advised language, that the Government were prepared to fight for free trade, and if that were so the right hon. Member for West Birmingham must be their most formidable antagonist. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had in almost identical terms described the policy of the Government. Yet at the present moment the official candidate for the South Birmingham vacancy was a declared supporter of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. The voice of the Government was the voice of Jacob, the hand was the hand of Esau. The Prime Minister had been more concerned in preparing a formula which it was more difficult for people not to follow than otherwise. That formula was retaliation. It did very well till subjected to examination, and nobody would disagree with him when he said that retaliation for freedom of negotiation meant two very different things to a free-trader and a protectionist. What had to be decided now was whether the next Administration which sat upon the Government Bench was to be a free-trade or protectionist Administration, and on that point no assurance had been given. In the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland there was still the old evasion of the question and the old refusal to indicate how far the Government intended to go. Then there was the benevolent neutrality of the Government which allowed the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham to pursue his campaign through the country. Last year all discussion on this subject was discouraged, and they were the victims of a conspiracy of silence. This year they had been the victims of a conspiracy of ambiguity. He supposed that the real object of the Government was to remain as long as possible in office, and he could quite understand a Government stooping to conquer, but he was very doubtful if they could conquer, however low they stooped in this case. The Unionist Party considered this question to be of first-rate importance, and the statement of the Government had neither convinced nor satisfied the free-trade element, nor did he suppose that the protectionists had derived much satisfaction from them. Those who heard the speech of his honourable colleague the Member for Plymouth on the previous Friday, would not say that the Government had been successful in gratifying the protectionist section of their supporters. His honourable colleague was one of the most strenuous as he was one of the most important supporters of the Birmingham policy, and he himself was quite as strenuous a free-trader. If he went into the lobby with the Government he would be regarded as a loyal supporter of the Government, and would be entitled to their support at the next general election, as also would his honourable colleague. No two opinions could be more dissimiliar than his and his colleague's on this occasion, and yet observe what was to be the result. Both of them were to appear before the same electors, were to be supported by the Government, and were to have their benediction and support to the bewilderment of, he thought he might say, a disgusted electorate. Surely by this time the Government had the courage to take one side or the other. They could understand the position of Mr. Chamberlain. He differed from the right hon. Gentleman, and disliked many of his methods, but he could respect him and also hon. Members who had supported him through thick and thin, and stuck to him and the policy he had enunciated. But as for the Government, it seemed to him they gave very little material for respect. The Party was being driven into protection, many members of it quite unconsciously; but whether they knew it or not, this policy of shift, evasion, and dexterous manipulation would carry them into the troublous seas of protection. There was no place for the Unionist free importer, and the time would not be far distant when there was not room in the Party for the Unionist negotiator, and it was possible the time might come when even Imperial preference was looked upon askance, and the Imperial preferentialist was regarded as something of the nature of a suspect by the members of the Tariff Commission. The Conservative Party was going through the process of voluntary liquidation. The business was being taken up by another syndicate, who had become possessed of the goodwill of the business and were quite prepared to cut the losses involved in the transaction. Surely, under the influence of protection, the Party must change its character, and the policy of the new Conservative Party would be such as his noble friend scarcely recognised, or perhaps cared to recognise.

He did not want to make too much of the apprehension which had been suggested as to the evil influences of corruption through protection, but it would not be wise to entirely ignore the influence of that factor. The corruption depended almost entirely upon the composition of the House. Now he wondered whether hon. Members had considered how far the composition of the Party was likely to be altered by the introduction of this new element. Protectionists had spoken in terms which they were bound to recognise as honest opinions, but how long would they remain when this new condition of affairs was introduced into the House? How long would they survive the introduction of the professional lobbyist? What position would the old-fashioned politician of to-day find himself in when the necessity for having a distinct representative would have forced business interests to get represented by some individual as their exclusive nominee? Corruption would follow in the wake of protection—it was not the Corrupt Practices Act which mainly guaranteed the purity of that Assembly, seats were not bought now for many reasons, but largely because they were not worth buying. It had come to his personal knowledge, however, that already manufacturing interests were on the look-out for suitable gentlemen, whose election expenses they offered to pay, if they would act as the direct representatives of their trades. What was the position of the free food Party with regard to all this? He did not know whether the Opposition had been congratulating themselves upon the division which existed in the Ministerial ranks. The Prime Minister had been quite unable to get his supporters into line, and they had already grouped themselves into Parties. Observe what an admirable instrument this was for recruiting. Those who were bold-hearted protectionists would enlist under the banner of the right hon. gentleman the member for West Birmingham; those who were merely Party men would meekly follow the Prime Minister; and those entertaining honest doubts might join with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol. If ever there was an occasion when they could say, "He that is not with us is against us," it was the present. He saw no alternative but to vote for the Amendment. He had no confidence in the Government, no confidence either in their intentions or their ability to check the protectionist movement, which he believed was fraught with danger to the country, and which would throw into the melting pot of chance the prospects of millions of people who had under our present system prospered and thriven. He did not see in the speeches of any member of the Government any determination to meet the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Believing, as he did, that that policy would be disastrous to the welfare of this country, he had no alternative course but to vote in favour of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman opposite.

Mr. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange) said he could not quite agree with what the hon. Member had said in regard to the speech made by his right hon. friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He had listened to that speech with very great attention, and it seemed to him a clear and straightforward statement of the policy of the Government. Upon the first day of this debate the President of the Board of Trade made an equally explicit statement, and he told them that the policy of the Government was not a policy of protection but a policy of free trade. He further stated that the Government disavowed altogether the policy associated with the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and he took that programme in detail and showed that the Government did not entertain it, and he also disavowed colonial preference and taxes on food. Although it was true that since the speech of the President of the Board of Trade various members of the Government had to some extent weakened their confidence in the thorough adherence of the Cabinet to the policy then enunciated, yet the Chief Secretary for Ireland had now re-echoed the assurances of the President of the Board of Trade. He himself was prepared to support the policy of the Government if they would honestly carry out their own policy. But there was a serious difference between the words of the Government and their actions. He objected to the way in which the Government had allowed the affairs of the country to drift. He had full confidence in their captain, but who and where was the pilot? A captain who for want of a pilot allowed his ship to drift on the rocks was guilty not merely of negligence but of barratry.

Alluding to the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham, he expressed the opinion that they were in danger of sacrificing the national ideal of freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, and freedom of trade, to what he would call a blatant Imperialism. There were two kinds of Imperialism, one true and the other false, one genuine and the other spurious. If by Imperialism they understood the spreading abroad of their dominions in the world with the object of elevating the lower races and spreading abroad the benefits of good government and granting the people self-government, that was an idea of Imperialism with which he thoroughly agreed, because it was one calculated to benefit the world. If on the other hand Imperialism meant mere pride in the power of a nation, a mere lust for dominion and a desire to obtain authority over other nations, and to exploit them for our own advantage and for the purpose of building up tariff walls around them, that was an Imperialism which he thought was not desirable. His hon. friend had made a violent attack upon the Free Food League. He was not surprised that objection should be taken to the title of "The Free Food League," because it drew attention to the most objectionable, the most odious feature of the programme, with which the right hon. Gentleman was associated—the taxation of the poor man's bread. MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] He was quite aware that it had been stated that the proposed taxes on food would be so counteracted by remissions of taxation on other articles that it would not increase the cost of living. If they had a guarantee that the tax would not exceed what was originally proposed he did not think it would affect the well paid artisan, but it would press severely upon the poorest of the poor. But what guarantee had they that such taxes would not be increased. Look at the experience of other nations and they would conclude that it was only reasonable to suppose that taxes on food would be increased. They had heard various inducements put forward for the adoption of this policy. The first time the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham brought forward his policy in this House he covered it with the promise of old-age pensions. What had become of old-age pensions now. The next thing was that this policy would cause a rise in wages, but they heard nothing about that now. Then another inducement was the prospect of more employment, but what was that prospect based upon? It depended entirely upon the transfer of a proportion of the employment of the country from one class to another. The ex-Colonial Secretary in his speeches had often pointed to the large amount of foreign manufactures imported into this country, and had asked why those goods should not be made in England. It seemed to him that this policy, in holding out the prospect of greater employment, which merely meant the transfer of a portion of employment from one class to another, evoked a very low moral tone and appealed to the baser instincts of humanity—greed, covetousness, and combativeness. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] What would become of shipping trade if this policy were carried out? It meant taking bread out of the mouths of the sailors, the railway men, and the dockers in order to put more into the mouths of another section of the community. The grievances attaching to the shipping trade could be rectified altogether apart from the policy of the ex-Colonial Secretary, for if that policy were adopted they would have to pay more for building and working their ships, and there would be less traffic for them to carry. He knew there were many shipowners in Liverpool who agreed with the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, but he disagreed with that policy.

Although he was an ardent believer in free trade, he acknowledged that a free-trade policy had its dangers. There could be no doubt that some of our industries were suffering from the system of free imports. Even our shipping industry which appeared prosperous was really not so prosperous. It was suffering severely from foreign competition, and our sailing ships to-day were being driven from the seas by vessels owned in foreign countries. Although the Foreign Secretary could protest against the present condition of things in regard to tariffs he could do nothing because he had no weapon. When one man came up after another and said that his trade was suffering from foreign competition he thought something must be done to improve the situation. The reason why the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham had acquired such influence in the country was not so much through agreement with his plan as by the people's confidence in the man himself. He said that, although he believed his plan was thoroughly unsound, he acknowledged that free trade had its limitations and its dangers. It was quite possible for a free-trade country to be crippled or even ruined under free trade, either by its industries being taken away in detail by aggressive taxation on the part of foreign competitors or by such a restriction of the area of competition that free trade had no room to operate. Our trade, he believed, was suffering from both these causes. The country wanted the power to put its foot down and to say, "We are unfairly treated." Everybody was a consumer, but the consumer was not everybody. He was not prepared to vote for the Amendment, for the Government had no desire to return to protection, and they disavowed their intention of taxing food.

*MR. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe) said the question was frequently asked what we were to do for markets if our chief customer shut their ports against us by means of tariffs, as Russia and the United States were doing at the present time. If anyone took the trouble to examine the figures he would find that the two great excluding countries still imported a large amount of manufactures. He ventured to say that if, under any conceivable circumstances, if all the manufacturing nations of the world had a tariff as high as that of Russia, there would still be a large total of imported manufactures. The country which had the advantage of free imports, and, as a consequence, of cheap production, would still do the lion's share of the trade, and an increasing proportion of it. He spoke as a practical manufacturer who had his living to get in competition with German "dumping" in cloth. He was a member of a Yorkshire firm of manufacturers, in the fourth generation, which lost its trade with America in 1864 owing to the Morell tariff, and after that acquired a trade with Germany, France, and Italy. They did a large German trade from 1866 to 1879, when the Bismarck tariff very largely closed it. [Cheers.] He would tell the Gentlemen who cheered something still worse. If ever there was a trade where there seemed to be a very good case for the protection now unblushingly advocated it was the woollen trade, because the imposition of the German tariff not only made Yorkshire manufacturers lose the German market, but by 1890 they had to compete in the English market with cloth made in Germany by means of English machinery and imported English foremen. But the Yorkshire manufacturers had been accustomed to make their own profits and not to look to the Government for them, and so instead of shutting down their mills they thought they would try self-protection rather than Government protection. His firm were manufacturers of cloth both for men's and women's wear. One of the very remarkable things about the woollen and other textile trades was that, whereas in men's wear the foreigners hardly made any headway at all in the English market, they did so in regard to women's wear. Some manufacturers knowing that fact thought that probably there was something more than mere protection to account for the German gaining our market here. If it had been protection only in his own country he would have exported cloth for men's wear to this country. Men wanted durability in their cloth, but he would ask hon. Members who had wives and daughters whether durability was liked by them when they got it. The reason for women being less desirous of durability in dress was quite clear. Women's fashions varied very much, and men's not so much. As an English manufacturer he was sorry to say that manufacturers in this country had not followed the trend of fashion so closely as they ought to have done. The manufacturers of this country had at their back the best labour, English labour, in the world, they had the further advantage of free access to raw material, and the workers had shorter hours of labour; and under these circumstances they had asked themselves whether it was not possible for English manufacturers to retain their own markets? In his own particular firm they had adopted the principle of profit-sharing, which he believed to be a great help in this matter. He agreed with Mr. Carnegie that they could not have the best brains of workers if they had not got their hearts. His firm, by improved machinery, by co-operation with the workmen, enlisting their enthusiasm, putting it to them not merely as a matter of personal interest, but patriotism, had succeeded. Six or eight years ago large buyers of cloth for mantle purposes in the English market used to look at German manufacturers' patterns first and those of the English afterwards. Now they looked at the English patterns first, and the Germans got the leavings which the English used to get.

What did retaliation mean? It meant that we were to get foreign nations to give us better terms. Had we the slightest hope of permanently compelling other nations to give our manufacturers better terms in order that we might compete against them? He did not believe any policy could be well founded which was not founded on an intelligent appreciation of self-interest. He for one did not sneer at Canadian preference. He appreciated it as beneficial to the colony and also to us, but it was an approach to free trade and not to protection. Our industry was not in a sound condition if our business depended upon preferences. The best way to command trade was to give good value. As to the argument of the Secretary of the Board of Trade on "dumping" it could only be effectively done by a perfect trade combine consisting of several separate works. And any such combine would prefer to close the more obsolete and unremunerative of such works rather than carry them on in order to "dump" on the foreigner at an enormous loss. That was what was actually taking place at that moment in the case of the United States Steel Trust, and other American iron manufacturers. It had been said that cotton would never be taxed. It had been taxed, and he showed a brass tag which had been inserted in bales of cotton in the United States, which showed that it was not against the Constitution of certain individual States to levy a duty on cotton. But if there was a Constitutional difficulty about imposing an export tax on cotton in the United States, could it be imagined that the great American nation would not amend its Constitution for the purpose of striking at this country in retaliation for import duties we might impose? He spoke as a Lancashire Member, and he had noticed that no hon. Gentleman engaged in the cotton manufacture had got up and advocated a policy which would be the ruin of Lancashire. On the faith of Mr. Macara, the President of the Cotton Spinners' Association, he could state that 80 per cent of their production went abroad. Even a small protective duty would mean ruin for the cotton industry of Lancashire and Yorkshire; it would be a bad thing for every trade in the country, and, above all, it would be worse for the poorest of the people, whom the House of Commons ought to be the first to protect.

SIR WALTER THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk) said he had been struck in the course of this debate by the comparative absence of hon. Members representing constituencies affected by foreign tariffs taking part in it. They had had a great deal of argument against the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, but practically nothing against the policy of the Government. There had been any amount of theoretical argument, but he had a strong opinion that practical experience was worth more than theoretical argument. He had the misfortune to be connected with two industries, both of which had suffered at the hands of the foreigners. He referred to the sugar trade and the woollen trade. Last year he had spoken on the sugar bounty question when the Sugar Convention Bill was before the House; now he intended to discuss the condition of the woollen trade as affected by hostile tariffs. Some months before the speech delivered by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham against foreign hostile tariffs, he had made a speech to his constituents, in which he pointed out that these foreign tariffs were practically sapping the export of woollen goods from this country, and that the Government, whether Conservative, Unionist, or Liberal, would some day be compelled to take up the question and deal with it. He said also that he trusted the question would be approached free from Party. He had likewise expressed the hope that the matter would be dealt with by diplomatic means in the first instance, but that if all efforts by diplomacy failed he was prepared to retaliate. He still hoped that if the Government were empowered to negotiate a modification of hostile tariffs might be attained without resorting to retaliation, and he might mention that one effect of the agitation in this country had been to stop the new Tariff Bill which was to have come into operation in Germany this year. That was a great achievement. High foreign tariffs had had a serious effect upon the woollen trade in this country. The productive power of the woollen trade in Great Britain was much in excess of the home consumption, and therefore any falling off in the exports of woollens abroad was a serious matter for the manufacturers to face. The flood-tide of the woollen export trade in this country was between 1870 and 1880 when the exports amounted to nearly £29,000,000, but they had now fallen to little over £9,000,000 of woollen fabrics alone. The imports of woollen goods in the period to which he referred only amounted to £3,000,000; they had now risen to £13,000,000, including £3,000,000 worth of yarns. The tariffs in America were so high that they practically excluded all British manufactures of woollen goods, and other European countries had teadily increased their protective tariffs against us except the decaying country of Turkey, where the import duty was only 8 per cent. Formerly we had done an enormous trade in woollen goods with France, Germany, and the United States. The trade with America was practically dead, and that with France and Germany was declining. Another test of the decline in the woollen trade in Scotland was the decrease in the number of people employed in the woollen factories, which had fallen from 40,000 to 25,000, and a much worse state of matters would have been shown but for some very considerable Government contracts for army clothing which had been secured by Border manufacturers in the past three or four years. Preferential tariffs had been given by Canada, and as a result our exports to that colony had increased by 50 per cent. New Zealand and the Cape had likewise passed Acts giving the mother country a preference. The result as regards Cape Colony was encouraging, for certain foreign manufacturers doing a Cape trade found themselves compelled to establish works in this country to enjoy the preference. This was satisfactory inasmuch as our workpeople would enjoy employment, and we should not grudge the masters carrying their profits to spend abroad if so disposed. He had neither joined the Tariff Reform League nor the Free Food League, and consequently might be considered an independent witness, and he must cordially, free trader as he had always been, support the policy of the Government, which, in his opinion, would make so-called free trade freer.

*MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): My intervention in this debate for a very few moments is not prompted by any desire to take part in the controversy as between free trade and protection. On the contrary, my object in intervening is to make clear that in the action which the Irish Members intend to take they decline absolutely to commit themselves, at this stage, on one side of the controversy or the other. Were it otherwise, if I had to make up my mind on the merits of the question before the House, I should be in great difficulty, because I do not know what the policy of the Government is, and I do not know what a vote given in their favour to-night would mean —whether it would mean a vote in favour of protection pure and simple, or some sort of colonial preference, or some vague thing called a power of retaliation, which so far as I know resides in the House at the present moment, and which, I believe, this House can never alienate from it. On the other hand, when I consider the merits of the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Montrose, I should find it impossible as as Irishman to subscribe to the statement contained in it that—

> "The removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population."

I presume that Ireland is included in the phrase "the realm," and so far as Ireland is concerned I respectfully state that in my judgment that statement is historically untrue. Ireland has unfortunately in the past suffered equally from the protective and from the free-trade policy of Great Britain. It is impossible to conceive anything more disgraceful, more shameful, than the story of the deliberate destruction of Irish industries by the action of the British Parliament. I remember a famous speech made by the present Prime Minister in 1895 in which he said that many of the ills of Ireland sprang from her poverty, and that England and Scotland were largely responsible for that poverty. In those days, before the introduction of steam, Ireland was in truth a formidable rival to Great Britain in commerce and manufactures, and in his great work Mr. Froude said—

> "The mere rumour of a rise of industries in Ireland created a panic in commercial circles in England, and the commercial leaders in England were possessed with a terror of the Irish rivalry which could not be exorcised, and

again and again the British manufacturers came together and petitioned the British Parliament to save them from the rivalry of Irish manufacturers."

And finally this Parliament listened to their voice, and when they did take action it certainly was thorough. Mr. Lecky had pointed out in his book that the Navigation Laws prohibited the importation of Irish cattle into England as "a public and common nuisance;" Irish beef, pork, bacon, butter, and cheese were all excluded, and he growth of the great woollen trade was the direct result of these restrictions of trade. That trade in turn was exterminated by the action of the British Parliament. The export of wool and woollen goods from Ireland was prohibited under pain of forfeiture of the goods and ships and a fine of £500 for every offence under a Statute of William III.; the Irish cotton trade had been ruined by a Statute of George II., and was killed by a protective duty in England of 25 per cent. At one time Ireland supplied all the cloth for the sails of the British Navy. An end was put to it by imposing duties upon all Irish-made sail cloth; and so with all Irish products of that day, and the result is summed up in these words, which I will read from Mr. Froude, who was not a witness very friendly to Ireland. "England," he said—

"Governed for what she deemed in her own interest, making her calculations in the gross balance of her trade ledgers, and leaving her moral obligations to accumulate as if right and wrong had been blotted out of the Statute-book of the universe. England determined to keep Ireland poor and miserable as the readiest means to prevent her from being troublesome. She destroyed her shipping industry by her trade navigation laws. She extinguished Irish manufactures by preferential duties. She laid disabilities even upon its wretched agriculture, for fear Irish importation might injure the English farmers. With their shipping destroyed by the Navigation Acts, their woollen manufactures taken from them, their trade in all its branches crippled, the only resource left to those of the Irish who cherished dreams of improving their unfortunate country was agriculture."

So the whole Irish nation was driven back upon agriculture; and then, having destroyed Irish industries by your protection policy, and having driven the whole nation back upon agriculture, then you stepped in with your free trade policy to complete our ruin. Mr. Speaker, I do not question for a moment the truth of the statement that for this country free trade at the time it was established was a blessing, and has conduced to the welfare and prosperity of the people of Great Britain. [OPPOSITION Cheers.] But, Sir, free trade came to Ireland in a different guise. It brought to Ireland all its disadvantages, and brought to Ireland none of its boons. [MINISTERIAL Cheers.] A good free trader and a good Liberal, the late Mr. Childers said, in his draft report of the Financial Relations Commission of 1895—

"The change,"

he said,

"in financial policy is usually considered to have been advantageous to a population, the great bulk of which had come to depend not upon agriculture, but on manufacturing industries and commerce. But it is evident this change was not advantageous to Ireland, a country in which there was little trade or manufacturing industry; and it must be said that just as Ireland suffered in the last century from protection and the exclusive commercial policy, so has she been at a disadvantage in this century from the adoption from the almost unqualified free trade policy in the United Kingdom."

Now, I say, under these circumstances, it is no wonder there is a state of apathy and indifference on this subject in Ireland. The spectacle presented by Ireland at this moment is very strange. She is an integral portion, so you say, of this Empire. She is supposed to have common interest with the Empire. Well, Sir, this country is ringing from end to end with this great fiscal controversy. It is the topic of conversation in the Senate and in the street. Go to Ireland and to-day it is the one topic no one is talking about. There is no interest at this moment taken in the question in Ireland at all. Ireland might as well be portion of any other Empire as of this, so far as interest in this question is concerned. So you may as well find yourself in Iceland as Ireland, so far as this quesion goes. The last line ever written before his death by Swift seems to me to express pretty well the views of the Irish people when to-day they are told they are to get a tariff for the protection of Irish goods. Swift was driving through the Phœnix Park just before his death, and he there saw a large number of workmen employed building a great powder magazine, and he wrote when he went back the following lines—

> "Behold the proof of Irish sense,
> Here Irish wit is seen,
> When nothing's left that's worth defence
> They build a magazine."

We have been told that Irish prosperity will revive if only a tax is put upon food, and that Irish industries will spring up again if only a tariff is put upon foreign imported articles, but we are somewhat sceptical about that in Ireland. A far more important question in Ireland is that of transit. Irish industries are strangled and destroyed by the expense of transit and the absence of facilities for transit. Transit in Ireland costs from 30 to 35 per cent. more than in Scotland and England. When the people of Ireland talked of protection they have in their minds protection against England. It is not Germany or any foreign nation but England which is the great dumper in Ireland. For such reasons public opinion in Ireland to-day is apathetic and unformed upon the situation which has arisen. For these reasons my colleagues and I refuse to commit ourselves, at this stage at any rate, upon one side or the other of this controversy. We prefer to hold ourselves in reserve and to await developments. I put this to the House of Commons. What a strange result it would be of the British refusal of Home Rule if the ultimate decision of this vast question should be dominated by the votes of a body of men who are in this House, but not of it, and who, in casting their votes, will refuse to think Imperially, but will be actuated by the sole consideration which course will conduce most speedily to the freedom and happiness of Ireland? There is one consideration which relieves me of any difficulty as to how I should vote on this occasion. The Amendment is, above all, a vote of want of confidence in the Government, and as that alone I regard it. The Irish Party has no confidence in the Government. Not only has the Government recently betrayed its solemn pledges to Ireland on the question of University education, but it has opposed an absolute *non possumus* to Ireland's claim for self-government. I say that no English Government which denies Ireland's claim for self-government can possess the confidence of the Irish Nationalists in the House. Upon this broad ground, and reserving full freedom of action in future developments in this fiscal controversy, my friends and I will vote to-night in favour of a Motion of want of confidence in the Government.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): We are now coming close to the conclusion of a debate of which I will say that it has probably been more interesting and certainly more remarkable in its circumstances than any debate which any one present can have listened to on a subject of the greatest, of vital and pressing, importance to the interests of the country—importance so vital and so pressing that it was necessary for my right hon. friend to move at the earliest possible moment of the session the Amendment to the Address which we have been discussing. It is often said and urged in the Press and elsewhere that this debate ought not to have been raised in the absence of the Prime Minister, and I think it well, as that contention goes deeper than may appear at first sight, at once to dispose of that objection. I need hardly repeat what I have already said from this place—how deeply we regret the right hon. Gentleman's absence and how cordially we hope that we may soon see him again among us all in his usual vigour and strength. But if we come to estimate the loss which his absence has inflicted on the House and on different parts of the House I am not sure that we of the Opposition have not suffered more than the Party or Parties opposite. It appears as if some persons have been learning rather too quickly their lesson, and have begun to think Imperially in the more evil domestic sense of the word Imperially. We live in this old country of ours—as yet at all events we live—under a constitutional system and not under an Imperial system. The Prime Minister of this country is, after all, as his name implies, a Minister; he is not the Chancellor of the British Empire, or even of these islands. He has colleagues who know his mind, who have assisted in framing their common policy, who share his responsibility. Am I to be told that no one of them is equal to the task of expounding what that policy is? Why, the theory will not stand for a moment. This Legislature is composed of two Houses, and in the House of Lords it has recently been the late President of the Council—it is now the Foreign Secretary—who speaks the mind of the Prime Minister and his Government, and expounds not only to that House but to the country and to all of us their policy. They find no difficulty in discharging that duty, whether on some intricate and critical question of foreign policy or as to some minor detail in an unimportant Bill. Further than that, down to a year and a half ago the great statesman who was Prime Minister of the country was not a member of this House, and the duty of being his mouthpiece was most perfectly discharged by the right hon. Gentleman who is now at the head of the Government.

The idea that the Government, when the Prime Minister is absent, are smitten with a sort of aphasia and are not able to speak for themselves is absurd. But there is more than this, Sir. This subject has been for months before the country, absorbing its interest almost to the exclusion of everything else. We have all of us been reading and thinking and talking about it until we are hardly able to think and read and talk of anything else. Nay, more. For the instruction of the Government, so we are told, an inquiry was directed, and the result of that has been published. There is no doubt or ambiguity whatever as to the attitude and opinion of the Opposition. There is almost as little doubt as to the purpose of that policy which I think, to avoid circumlocution, I may call the Birmingham policy. I suppose I may use that phrase without giving offence to other places, for Sleaford and Sheffield follow cheerfully in Birmingham's train. Besides that, the right hon. Gentleman has surrounded himself with a specially chosen Cabinet. He has put away from among them the unclean thing, and the unclean thing is now sitting below the gangway. This modern Gideon, like his great prototype, has chosen to serve with him those only who lap with their tongue, though I should not be candid if I did not say that some of them seem to me sometimes to overlap with their tongue. With all the time they have had for becoming familiar with their own policy, and having been selected for their solidity and fidelity, it is inconceivable that any one can say that they are dependent on the Prime Minister to tell us what their policy is. But how absurd it would have been if, on this plea of the illness of the Prime Minister or any other, we had been content to remain silent and inert and to abdicate our functions. We were shut out from the discharge of those functions last summer by the tactics of the Government. We must not allow ourselves to be any longer silent. We must take our part in this House in pronouncing judgment on the matter before the country, and we must not leave it altogether to the electors. We are constantly being reminded that, after all, we are not the only jury called upon to give a decision in this matter. Another discussion, debate, and decision is proceeding sporadically and intermittently through the country. I referred on the opening night of the session to the extraordinary series of by-elections which has taken place; but during the last few days there has been given the most striking, significant, and reverberating decision of them all in a district peculiarly favourable to the Government, with political traditions and personal attachments all in their favour, in a constituency of well-to-do residents and of industries that have been sorely pressed by foreign competition. Where can you find any place in the kingdom where the Government were more likely to get their own way? I am only surprised, and I say so openly, that men who have the ordinary feeling and consideration for their own dignity and self-respect can remain disregardful of such a result. We have known a great Government, a powerful Government with a large majority, which, on the occurrence of a conspicuous proof that there was a revulsion of feeling against them in the country, did not hesitate to put their fate to the test, and win or lose it all. Of course, there are various Governments with varying standards of conduct. What I want to know is—Is there an official policy capable of being reduced to practice and of being expressed in intelligible English? If there is, why do not they produce it? They say it is for the country and not for Parliament or this House to have this policy explained to them. When the country has been consulted and given its mandate—then, and not until then, the information will be given. This much we have gathered from the debate.

Sir, the situation has no parallel. According to the chief Whip of the Government, there will be no general election this year or next. The Leaders of the Party find the trade of the country in such a position that they have decided that it is necessary to "reverse, annul, and delete" the fundamental canons of free trade. The Prime Minister has said so. The Minister who has been for eight years at the Colonial Office, and who, in the unanimous opinion of his colleagues, is the greatest Imperial figure of this or any age, has gone into the wilderness in order to avert, if he can, the dissolution of the Empire. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, not unconnected with him, bids us beware lest the history of the loss of the American colonies is repeated; and all these signs and portents and convulsions which have startled and alarmed the country we are now asked to believe involve nothing more than the assertion of a high-sounding but nonsensical proposition about the resumption of freedom of negotiations. Was there ever such an anticlimax in our political history? If the Prime Minister on 3rd October was able to tell the Duke of Devonshire, as he did tell him, that he saw no difficulty in carrying out the policy by the help of his newly-constructed Government, what has happened since then? To be in possession of a policy which must not be disclosed, which must not be put in operation, while circumstances are clamouring for action, seems to imply that Ministers have only a half-belief in their own policy or else they dread that its reception would not be favourable. Otherwise, why should not some beginning at least have been made before the distant date of the general election—some beginning at least in the work of repairing the alleged desolating ravages of sixty years of free trade? Everything is in favour of the Government. They have a policy which they say they are agreed upon and which they understand themselves. The whole Party is said to be in absolute harmony, which must, of course, be quite true. They have a precedent in their own Sugar Convention, which not only retaliated by the imposition of countervailing duties but by the prohibition of the entrance to our ports of the commodity involved. They have a session with very little work to be done. And yet, according to the President of the Board of Trade and his colleagues, they are going to do nothing, but to wait for a mandate at the next general election. The only impatient person that I have discovered is the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol. He, for one, evidently only half believes in this doctrine of retaliation, but with all the fevered and anxious zeal of the half-converted he wishes at once to rush into action. He is impatient of these dilatory pleas. Some Continental nations, he says, are engaged in framing *tarifs de combat*. There is the opportunity. Why not try your persuasive methods at once? Never mind the mandate, says the right hon. Gentleman. I do not know whether I am right in my suspicion, but it looks to me as if the right hon. Gentleman was anxious that if they are to flourish their weapon in the face of their rivals and neighbours it had better be done before the weapon is loaded, lest the kick of their pistol be more than they can stand. This policy of freedom of negotiation has been dealt with very gingerly as if it were some poisonous draught, and not what it is represented to be, the dearly purchased elixir of Party harmony and fiscal regeneration. Is it uncharitable to suggest that the official policy is, after all, not entirely believed in by any section of those who have adopted it, and that it has in fact been adopted, not to please either the free-traders or the protectionists, for both dislike it, and not in the interest of trade, but as a formula devised to keep in a Conservative Ministry? If this is not the case, why is it that free-traders opposite cannot whole-heartedly support it, and why do protectionists and preferentialists, which is the same thing, show no enthusiasm for it, and in fact pour contempt upon it as a final arrangement, and only tolerate it as a halfway house, or the sign board of a halfway house, on the high road to protection?

Our efforts have been directed, not with much success, to discover the nature of this policy, what it covers, how far it goes, and whether it includes more than it seems to include, whether it will stand on its own legs, whether it is a practical policy economically and constitutionally defensible. Speeches of members of the Government, Cabinet Ministers and others, have not, I am sorry to say, helped us much; but a most remarkable fact in the debate is this—that in this great financial discussion from first to last not a word has come to us from the Minister of Finance. Was ever such a thing seen before? It is almost farcical; it is a slight to the House and the country.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): If the right hon. Gentleman knew the facts I do not think he would make that statement. For private reasons it was not open to me to take part in the early days of the debate, and at the request of my right hon. friend who is leading the House I had arranged to speak on Friday. I did not do so because we received a message from the other side to the effect that, owing to the number of Members who wished to take part in the debate, no representative of the Front Bench opposite would speak on Friday, and, as I understood, they hoped no representative of this Bench would speak. In any case, it is not fair to say I was slighting the House because in the circumstances I had not taken part in the debate.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman will allow me to say that I was not imputing any slight to him personally. I meant the Government, who arrange the debate. I would also point out to the right hon. Gentleman that if anyone had known he was desirous of speaking, any self-denying ordinance on Friday, such as he speaks of, would have been dropped at once, and that there have been other opportunities—today for instance. [HON. MEMBERS: Now!] I adhere to what I said—I will venture to say there is no instance of a fiscal, financial discussion of such vital importance having been carried on in the House and the Minister of Finance not taking his part in it. The right hon. Gentleman, to whom, I assure him, we all mean well and wish well, really must be aware of the fact that he is himself in a somewhat delicate position. It is not as if he was a Finance Minister who had been established in his office, and whose benign, serene tranquillity had been suddenly broken into by this troublesome question of tariff reform; not at all—the volcano was in full operation before the right hon. Gentleman was appointed. He was appointed when the policy of the Government was determined upon in order to carry out that policy. If I may adopt a barbarous expression it has been the custom to introduce in other debates, he was an *ad hoc* Minister, and therefore there was a peculiar obligation upon him to take part in the discussion. I am not going to analyse the speeches of other Ministers who have spoken; their vagueness, inconsistency, and variety will be remembered without quotation. They have obviously been angling day after day for the support of their followers. If a gaudy fly did not provoke a rise from a particular trout whom they wished to catch, although it was acceptable to others whom they could catch any day, then the next Minister would put on a fly of a more sober colour, and so on. These performances went on under our eyes. "We are prepared to fight for free trade," said the President of the Board of Trade. No other Minister said that, and it was pretty clear that no other Minister even thought it; and even the President of the Board of Trade, while saying that the policy of the Government was not protection, yet used all the protectionist arguments, and declared his own personal adhesion to the policy of preference and taxed food. Every other Minister who spoke in this Ministry which is "prepared to fight for free trade," either in open words or by implication, sympathised with the Birmingham policy. The Secretary of State for the Colonies, speaking at Leamington on 26th January, said—

> "The result of the deliberations which he had imperfectly placed before them was that there must be a revision of our fiscal system, which must recover the power of negotiation, and, having brought about such a revision, we shall sooner or later come to colonial preference."

This is the Government which is, two or three years hence, to go to the country at a general election to get a mandate on the sole question of liberty of negotiation, and who will give no support, as I understand it, to those further policies which the right hon. Gentleman has pointed to as having his sympathy. Then, here is the Home Secretary, who, speaking at Swansea on 27th January, said—

> "The Government did not intend to tax raw material, and have no desire to tax food in such a way as to increase in the aggregate the cost of living to the working man. If without increasing the cost of living to the working man we could construct a satisfactory tariff by shifting the burden from one class of food to another, he did not see why it should not be done."

The language when we hear it seems strangely familiar. Why? Because the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham put forward this idea at Glasgow, almost in these very terms, and the words seem to cover that further policy with which the Government now say they will have nothing to do. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded—

> "The Conservative and Unionist Party were unanimous as to the first part of the programme. The second part of the programme desired by Mr. Chamberlain was difficult of realisation at once, but he felt convinced himself that the country would give in the first instance the mandate which was asked for."

The mandate is to be given as the first step towards the further policy; if the further policy is not intended, the words were calculated to mislead those who heard them. Again, I quote the right hon. Gentleman on an earlier occasion at Canterbury, when he exhibited an extraordinary intimacy with the mind of the Prime Minister, which really disposes of the whole question of the possibility of any one representing the Prime Minister in this House, because he said this—

> "The Prime Minister had laid down a policy which fell a little short, possibly, of the policy which some of his friends and himself would like to see adopted. The majority"—

That is of the Party—

> "supported the Prime Minister, who on every other subject but the taxation of food"—

that is to say, a tax on manufactures and preference—

> "was absolutely in accord with the late Colonial Secretary."

Those are all the quotations with which I shall trouble the House, except one, and it is from a speech delivered at Dover by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, where he said:—

> "Mr. Chamberlain had laid down a high commission"—

Not the Tariff Commission—

> "in order that he might more freely reconnoitre the route whence he thought the best and surest way towards the closer unity of the Empire. Mr. Chamberlain said he did not wish to commit the main body of the Unionist army to that route until he had explored it."

The House will see that here we have the same thing. We have the declaration made in this House that the Government are not prepared to go one inch beyond negotiation or retaliation, but in reality their eye all the time is upon further progress upon the line of route towards protection. So that, even if the Home Secretary were to come forward with the tongue of an angel or with some pontifical rescript and preach free trade, he could not obliterate the words of his colleagues or exorcise the tone of pure protection which has been sounded in the declarations of the Government in this critical debate, and which has pervaded their electoral action in the country. That is the impression left by the debate upon the House and the country. It was inevitable. Why? Because retaliation on the lines and in the interest of free trade—the sort of retaliation which has been indicated—is both economically and constitutionally impossible in this country. Take the economic view first. A tariff country may take up with reciprocity as a means of advance towards free trade, because it has duties on hand which it can modify or abandon to suit its purpose, and conceivably in such a case something may be done against hostile tariffs. But a free-trade country cannot remain free-trade if it declares war on tariffs and tries to check dumping by duties and prohibitions. It was said by the President of the Local Government Board that when other countries knew that the Government was authorised to use retaliatory powers, the effect would be almost as great as if those powers were actually exercised. But if I may use a word which I dislike—though not so much as I dislike the thing it stands for—that would be bluffing. And how kind and considerate the right hon. Gentleman has been to all rivals in informing them of the nature of his game. Tariff attacks, said the Prime Minister at Sheffield, must be met by tariff replies. If once these tariffs are applied, human nature being what it is, they will remain in force and become the centre of attraction for fresh protection. It was by this line of reasoning that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham arrived at Glasgow at his 10 per cent. on manufactured goods. He foresaw the future of this weapon of negotiation; and knowing that tariffs once applied would stick, and be followed by other tariffs, he cut the knot boldly and declared for a general tariff on manufactures.

The case could not be put more clearly than by the hon. Member for the Partick division. He speaks with no small authority, for if he stands not upon the throne he is near it, and he says—

> "Once accept the principle of using tariffs for other purposes than revenue only, and a great many other things must follow. The country would be asked for a full and deliberate mandate to use the tariff for political purposes, to obtain employment, and a higher class of employment for the people, to draw the parts of the Empire closer together. This undoubtedly means preference, a duty on manufactures, a general tariff, and a tax on food."

It is no good saying "That is not the kind of retaliation we have in our minds." These things are governed by laws, not by declarations, and if in a free-trade country you begin using tariffs for purposes other than revenue, where can you stop? The acceptance of protection becomes a question only of time and degree. Thus retaliation is fatal to free trade. But it is also fatal to constitutional rule and procedure. Why? You have only to bear in mind the root distinction between a free-trade country and a tariff country, as parties to commercial negotiations, to see it at once, and to understand why the Government will not tell us, in spite of all our questions, what share Parliament is to have in the imposition and the removal of the contemplated tariffs. The distinction is this. A tariff country has only to adjust duties already sanctioned by the Legislature. I ask the attention of the House to this argument. In a tariff country they deal with a tariff already sanctioned by the Legislature, whereas in our case the negotiator, be he Chancellor of the Exchequer, Secretary of State, or President of a Department, must of necessity impose duties, whether it be done by Order in Council or otherwise, and the essence of the transaction is that you will have tariffs imposed by Executive action. This House cannot negotiate a treaty of commerce. The part of Parliament would therefore be limited to giving a general assent to the Executive to put on what duties it pleased. That is what it comes to, and there is no other way of it. This is a power which neither this House nor the country, please heaven, will ever grant. The Chief Secretary to-day used a phrase that I think was well calculated to startle us. He said there was to be no departure in their policy from the doctrine of free trade, the only departure would be from the "routine of Budget-making." In other words, it would mean the abolition of the immemorial control of this House over the taxation and the finance of the nation. What is Budget-making? It is the imposition or the removal of taxation—

MR. WYNDHAM: I am very sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but if he quotes one phrase from my speech he must quote another—subject to the effective control of Parliament, or, rather, of this House, over the financial policy of the country.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A perfectly meaningless qualification ["Oh"] because there would be required a general power given by Act of Parliament to the Executive, the consent of the House of Lords would then be necessary to alter that, and the House would deliberately have parted with its freedom of action in this most vital matter. I conceive that this constitutional effect of this proposal far exceeds in importance the fiscal effect. The right hon. gentleman and his colleagues, if they wish now to negotiate for better terms with any country, can negotiate as much as they like, imposing the condition, as was done with your Sugar Convention, that the assent of Parliament must be obtained. What the right hon. Gentleman points to is a totally different matter; it is the granting to the Executive of a standing power to do as they like in the matter of taxation. ["No."] Yes, and that is such an infringement of the rights of Parliament and the proper constitutional methods followed in this country that I think it deserves to be pointed out in order that the House and the country may see in what direction they are being led. Did the Government not know they would be cutting into the fibres of the Constitution by such a principle? If so, what are we to think? If they did know it, and yet went on, still more what are we to think?

I have addressed my observations almost entirely to this question of retaliation, because that is the question before the House. It is the Government policy which we have been desiring to get at, to obtain information about.

MR. WYNDHAM: Hear, hear!

*SIR H. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: I cannot say that either from the right hon. Gentleman who cheers or from any other have we received more than ambiguous and general phrases; but still we know enough from the speeches that have been made, and the indications therein, the tendency and the mind of the Government and of its members, to be sure that the acceptance of that policy would lead straight, and without long delay, to the doctrines and practice of the Birmingham school; in other words, to full-fledged and unblushing protection. On that ground we are opposed, on this side of the House, root and branch to the whole policy. There must be many on the other side of the House who share that view. We have seen with admiration and respect the courageous action of members of the Party opposite who have sacrificed old associations, old claims upon their affection, and sacrificed to some extent, I dare say, the friendship of their friends in order to adhere to what they believe to be fiscal rectitude and sound policy. They have followed, no doubt at a great interval, the noble example set by the greatest leader their Party ever had, Sir Robert Peel, who made similar sacrifices in his time. I, of course, have no right, no claim, or wish to speak for those hon. and right hon. Gentlemen. As for those with whom I have the honour of acting, I can only repeat that we adhere to the old doctrines on this subject, and that we shall give to any departure from them, whether it be a large departure or a small departure leading to the larger one, the strongest opposition.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): Mr. Speaker, I cannot but express my regret, although I think it was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Fife who said we had had enough expressions of regret, at the absence of my right hon. friend the Prime Minister. I regret it not only on account of his illness, which is a regret common to both sides of the House, but because it places me in the somewhat difficult position of having to wind up this debate. I trust that in these circumstances I can count on the kind indulgence of the House. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has addressed a few words of congratulation and support to certain hon. friends of mine who at the present moment are sitting below the gangway. He has suggested that through the action they have taken there may be some loss of friendship. May I assure them that, so far as I am concerned, I shall never forget the years we have served together, and that, on whichever side of the House we may sit, I hope there will be a continuance of the same friendly relations which have existed for so many years past? The right hon. Gentleman, and, in fact, nearly every speaker who has taken part in this debate, has hurled against the Government the charge that we are in favour of protection. We are not in favour of protection. We have not advocated it, and we do not intend to advocate it.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): It is being advocated in South Birmingham.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I will not give way to the noble Lord. The noble

Lord has interrupted regularly throughout this debate.

Lord HUGH CECIL made an interruption which was not heard in the gallery.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The noble Lord says that protection has been advocated in Birmingham.

Lord HUGH CECIL: Yes, in South Birmingham, by the Government candidate.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I will deal with that subject, if the noble Lord will allow me, a little later on in my speech. I am very anxious to say something about Government candidates and Government supporters if he will kindly bear with me for a few moments; and I hope he will not be disappointed. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has asked us whether we are going to fight the battle of free trade. We are going to fight the battle of freer trade. We are anxious to see a reduction in those hostile tariffs which have been so inimical to the trade and commerce of this country. We have been denounced because, in the absence of the Prime Minister, there was no one who could state the policy of the Government, and it has been said that in his absence the House was entirely gnorant of what that policy was. I venture to think that those who listened to the speech of my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade on Monday last, cannot but think that he worthily filled the position which would have been taken by his right hon. relative if he had been well enough to be in the House and to discharge the duty of explaining our policy. He announced the policy which my right hon. friend the Prime Minister put before the country at Sheffield. That is the policy of the Government, and that is the policy of every member on this Bench. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has another complaint. He has told us that the Government intended to pursue this policy and to bring about an alteration of our fiscal system by Executive action and without taking the House of Commons into consultation. It is not a part of the Government's policy to withdraw in any way from this House any control which it has over the fiscal or financial arrangements of the country. I should like to state again, to my hon. friends especially, what is the policy, as I define it, laid down by the Prime Minister. I will state it in the fewest and clearest words that I can use. The principles of the policy are—that the Government, when conducting negotiations with foreign countries, should have the power, when necessary, to threaten retaliation, and when the threat is insufficient that they should have power to carry it out. The Government have no intention of taxing raw material, and their policy does not include the taxation of food. Neither do the Government propose the imposition of any taxation for the purpose of fostering a home industry which is subjected only to natural and legitimate competition. I think there was some misunderstanding with regard to a remark made by my right hon. friend the Secretary for the Colonies, which has led some of my hon. friends to think that, when a retaliatory duty is put on, the Government's intention is to keep it on for all time. Of course, if a retaliatory duty has been put on to secure a particular object, and that result has been achieved by means of it, naturally the duty would come off.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): And if the object is not secured ?

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: If it is not secured it would be kept on. Objection has been taken in the course of the debate with regard to the question of colonial preference. Well, the question of colonial preference does not come within the policy of His Majesty's Government, and that was made perfectly clear by the statement of my right hon. friend the Prime Minister in his speech at Sheffield. That statement was confirmed by my right hon. friend in a further speech which he made at Bristol. He then said that no colonial preference which involved a tax upon food would be included in the policy which he put forward at Sheffield. My right hon. friend said at Sheffield—

"I am speaking here as one who is bound to give advice to a great Party on the policy that they should regard as their official policy, and, as the best result of my reflection, I am bound to ask them to consider that a tax upon food in the present state of public opinion is not within the limits of practical politics."

Some hon. Gentlemen seem to think that we are going to carry out this policy without consulting the people of this country. We have distinctly stated that this policy is not to come into operation during this Parliament, and that it is not to come into operation until there has been a distinct opinion given in its favour by the electorate of the country—that is, the policy of retaliation; I have already pointed out that preference is not a part of the Government policy at all.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Do the Government oppose it?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Certainly the Government will be bound to oppose it in keeping their pledge, and until the electorate have pronounced in its favour. We should have to have the distinct opinion of the people of the country that that policy should be adopted.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): Have you no opinion of your own?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have a very strong opinion myself that it should not come into operation until those conditions are fulfilled. With regard to the policy of retaliation, some of my hon. friends seem to think that it is a new policy which has recently been adopted by the Conservative Party. My recollection goes back to 1880, when the Prime Minister said in this House that he desired to see a policy of retaliation adopted. In 1882, my right hon. friend the Member for Croydon put forward a Resolution in favour of an inquiry into the fiscal system of the country, and in the speech which he made on that occasion, he distinctly advocated retaliation and said he saw no reason at all why retaliation was in any way a departure from free-trade doctrine. In 1885, Lord Salisbury advised the country that further weapons were necessary in order to deal with hostile tariffs which were in an unfriendly spirit imposed on the goods of this country. Speaking again in 1902, at Hastings, the noble Lord again advocated that policy. It is, therefore, no new policy; it is no new departure, and my right hon. friend will be making no new departure in Conservative policy in adopting a policy of retaliation. Then, Sir, the noble Lord the Member for Greenwich raised some question with regard to the treatment of Government Members and candidates. May I say a word or two as to the policy adopted by the Party to its candidates and to Members, and I think the noble Lord will do me this favour to admit that I am able to speak with some authority? I have been associated with Conservative organisations for as long a time, I think, as any Member of this House, probably with the exception of my hon. friends the Members for Dartford and Cambridge University, and I can say this, that we have never made economic questions a test of Party loyalty. It has been recognised that in the Conservative Party differences of opinion might exist on this particular question. It has been recognised in the course of the debate that men holding very different opinions on this question might be in the same Cabinet. In fact, I remember that my right hon. friend the Member for Thanet sat in the same Government with so strong a free-trader as Sir Stafford Northcote, and again there sat in the same Cabinet my right hon. friend the Member for Sleaford and my right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol. The question or the doctrine rather of Cabinet responsibility is in no wise altered by recent proceedings. The responsibility of the Cabinet affects the action of the Cabinet, but I have never heard it laid down that the Members composing the Cabinet were compelled to speak with one voice upon questions not included in the policy of the Cabinet or under their consideration, nor have I ever heard it said that it would be possible to take that course. You have the case of coalition Governments. How could they be formed if Members were precluded from holding different views. And so I go on with regard to the question of Party management now. It has been the invariable rule of the Conservative Party to give support to the central authority and to the candidate who is prepared to support the general policy of the Party as laid down by the Prime Minister or the Leader of the Party, and providing he has the support of the local associations. We have never forced a candidate on the local associations, and we have never refused support to their adopted candidate. The noble Lord wanted to know whether an hon. Member supporting the Sheffield policy and an hon. Member supporting a more advanced policy would receive the same support from the Conservative Association. I should say certainly, as long as they receive the support of their local associations; and my hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury has observed that he would certainly make no difficulty with regard to the candidates who are standing now. The condition must be that they are supported by their local associations and that they necessarily support the policy of the Government. How else would hon. Members have it?

*Lord HUGH CECIL: If the Government really want to fight for free trade, that is not the way to do it.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I am perfectly prepared to argue this point, though a domestic incident of this sort is one which should be discussed at a Party meeting rather than in the House of Commons. I think I am right in saying that this is a subject which has been not only pressed upon us by hon. Members below the gangway but by an authority like the hon. Member for South Aberdeen.

May I now return to the Amendment? Apart from being a vote of censure, it would not be very difficult, if the Amendment were dissected, to find reasons for supporting it on this side of the House. The first part of this Amendment says—

> "But it is our duty, however, humbly to represent to Your Majesty that our effective deliberation on the financial service of the year is impaired by conflicting declarations from Your Majesty's Ministers."

I do not think the preamble of the Amendment has any real effect. I am quite sure that hon. Members can perfectly well discuss the Estimates for the present year, especially as the subject which we have been discussing for six days cannot possibly form a part of the subject of discussion. In other words, the fiscal policy is no portion of the year's Estimates, and Gentlemen interested in Supply will find no difficulty at all in exercising their powers of ample criticism. I am perfectly certain that the hon. Member for King's Lynn will be able to fully discuss the Estimates, and that the hon. Member for Mid Lanark will also be able to criticise them. The chief point now under consideration is contained in the following words of the Amendment—

> "We respectfully submit to Your Majesty the judgment of this House that the removal of protective duties has for more than half a century actively conduced to the vast extension of the trade and commerce of the realm and to the welfare of its population; and this House believes that, while the needs of social improvement are still manifold and urgent, any return to protective duties, more particularly when imposed on the food of the people, would be deeply injurious to our national strength, contentment, and well-being."

That is not a proposition which in the ordinary way any one on this side of the House would be inclined to dispute. But it is put down as a vote of censure, and therefore the Government are bound to resist it. The right hon. Gentleman has, with that galaxy of legal talent which surrounds him, drawn an Amendment with great success to entice the votes of certain Members on this side of the House. They must know what is the effect of a vote of censure, and I trust that they will not be led away on this occasion, but will support His Majesty's Government. I should like to tell them what would happen if this Resolution were carried. It would mean the breaking up of the Unionist Party on an imaginary issue. Do my hon. and right hon. friends wish to place on those Benches a Government which is supported, as we hear they would be, by the Nationalist vote.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: That depends.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I judge so from the speech delivered to-night by the hon. Member the Leader of the Irish Party. That Government would comprise men who are pledged to the policy of Home Rule, and to all the endless items of the Newcastle programme? At a moment of grave international crisis, when questions of vast gravity have occurred in the Far East, when it is essential in the interests of the Empire that there should be a Government which has shown its desire for the maintenance of the Empire's prestige in order to deal with them promptly and effectively, I would ask my hon. friends below the gangway on this side of the House—Are they going to give their verdict on this question in the absence of Prime Minister? If their loyalty to him is sincere, I appeal to them with all the force at my command not to record a judgment against him in his absence.

SIR J. STIRLING-MAXWELL (Glasgow, College): I crave leave to ask my right hon. friend one question upon a point which I did not understand clearly from his speech. I think he wished to make it clear. Is the Government opposed to the taxation of food as proposed by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham? I understand that that proposal is not part of the Government's policy, but I beg to ask whether the Government is or is not opposed to that proposal?

SIR LEES KNOWLES (Salford, West): Are the Government opposed to a duty on food or raw material?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have said that the Government are opposed to any duty on raw material or food.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 276; Noes, 327. (Division List, No. 2.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbt. Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bill, Richard
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brown, Geo. M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Channing, Francis Allston
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clancy, John Joseph
Cogan, Denis J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Crooks, William
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (Galway
Devlin, Joseph (Kilkenny, N.)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt Hon. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt E C (SAndrw'sBghs
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
Emmott, Alfred
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Ffrench, Peter
Field, William
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph

Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Mich. (Lond. Univ.
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Grant, Corrie
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Grey, Rt. Hn. Sir E. (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hain, Edward
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hamilton, Rt Hn LordG.(Midx
Hammond, John
Harcourt, Rt. Hn. Sir William
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydv
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harrington, Timothy
Harwood, George
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jordan, Jeremiah
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacDonnell, Dr. Mark A.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Fadden, Edward
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morley, Rt Hn John (Montrose
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, M
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, William
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reckitt, Harold James
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Chas, Prestwich (Leigh)
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isleof Wight
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, E.)
Smith, H. C (North'mb. Tyneside
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R (Northants
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, D. Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomas, J. A. (Glam., Gower)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
Tillet, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Weir, James Galloway
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whiteley, George (York, W. R.
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Chas. Henry (Hull, W.)
Wilson, F. W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Durham, M
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wood, James
Woodhouse, Sir J. T (Huddersf'd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES — Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Aird, Sir John
Allhusen, Augustus Hry. Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William

Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banes, Major George Edward
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F (Middlesex
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A (Glasgow
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W (Derbyshire
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (Worc
Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir J. Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Dewar, Sir T. R (Tower Hamlets

Dickinson, Robert Edmond
Dickson, Charles Scott
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Jos. C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Rt. Hn. Sir John E.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj. E. (T'r Hamlets
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Orms.-(Salop
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(Linc.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir E. W (B'ry S Edm'nds
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Greene, W. Raymond-(Cambs.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Gunter, Sir Robert
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Harris, Dr. Fredk. R. (Dulwich
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanl'y
Heath, James (Staffords. N.W.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Horner, Frederick William

Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks., N.R.)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W (Salop
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir J. (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Jn. G. (Yorks., N.R.)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lowther, Rt. Hn. James (Kent
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (Wigt'n
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriessh.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, William (Burnley)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath

Myers, William Henry
Newdegate, Francis A. N.
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (Salisbury)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Hn. M. W. (Stalybridge)
Ridley, S. Forde (Bethnal Green
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Robinson, Brooke
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. Edw. J.
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuff, Charles
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H. (Sheff'd
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.

Main Question again proposed.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel*) put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

PUBLIC PETITIONS.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed, to whom shall be referred all Petitions presented to the House, with the exception of such as relate to Private Bills; and that such Committee do classify and prepare abstracts of the same, in such form and manner as shall appear to them best suited to convey to the House all requisite information respecting their contents, and do report the same from time to time to the House; and that the reports of the Committee do set forth the number of signatures to each Petition only in respect to those signatures to which addresses are affixed:—And that such Committee have power to direct the printing *in extenso* of such Petitions, or of such parts of Petitions, as shall appear to require it. And that such Committee have power to report their opinion and observations thereupon to the House.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of Mr. Allsopp, Mr. Edward Barry, Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree, Mr. Brymer, Sir Charles Dalrymple, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Sir Henry Meysey-Thompson, Mr. Charles Morley, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Philipps, Mr. Tollemache, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, and Mr. Henry Joseph Wilson.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 16th February, 1904.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Barnard Castle Gas [H.L.]; Cardiff Railway [H.L.]

Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—Bristol Tramways (Extension).

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—Govan Burgh (Electricity).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Clyde Valley Electrical Power Bill [H.L.] Presented; read 1^{a}; and referred to the Examiners.

Lancashire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; West Riding Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Cambrian Railways Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill [H.L.]; Tyneside Tramways and Tramroads Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill [H.L.]; Harlow and Sawbridgeworth Gas Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway (Extension of Time, &c.) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^{a}.

Dumbarton Tramways Order Confirmation Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^{a}; to be printed, and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been read 2^{a} [The Lord Kintore (*E. Kintore*)], and reported from the Committee. (No. 12.)

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIES (MISCELLANEOUS).

No. 26. Northern Nigeria. Report on a series of mineral and vegetable products from Northern Nigeria, by Professor W. R. Dunstan, Director of the Imperial Institute.

AFRICA, No. 3 (1904).

Correspondence respecting the introduction of Chinese labour into the Transvaal.

TREATY SERIES, No. 3 (1904).

Agreement between the United Kingdom and Italy providing for the settlement by arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the two Governments; signed at Rome, 1st February, 1904.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

CHELSEA HOSPITAL (ARMY PRIZE MONEY AND LEGACY FUNDS, 1902-1903.)

Account of the receipts and expenditure of the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital (for services other than those voted by Parliament), in the year ended 31st March, 1903; together with the report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon.

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS.

Twelfth Annual Report of the proceedings of the Inspection Committee of Trustee Savings Banks, for the year ended 20th November, 1903; with appendix.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM.

Statement of the funds, 5th January, 1904. Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SEA FISHERIES BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, undersized flat fish have not been fortunate at the hands of Parliament. Many Bills have been brought in to endeavour to preserve them, but none of them have succeeded in commanding the support of both Houses of Parliament. As long ago as 1888 this question was brought before Parliament by a conference of those interested in the trawling

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

industry. Some of them waited upon me as a deputation a short time ago, and one or two of those gentlemen pathetically observed that most of those who had originally taken part in urging this question had now joined the great majority. A Bill was brought in by Mr. Bryce, then President of the Board of Trade, in 1895. Another Bill was brought in by the present Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland (the Earl of Dudley), then representing the Board of Trade in this House, both in 1896 and 1897. In 1898 my noble friend Lord Heneage brought in a Bill, and in 1899 a measure was introduced by Lord Camperdown, and the last Bill on the subject was one brought in by Mr. Ritchie when he was President of the Board of Trade in 1900. That Bill was referred to a Commitee, which considered it very carefully. The Committee reported that in their opinion it had been established that there were certain well-known areas in the North Sea where small and young fish congregate, and that if we could prevent fishing in such areas it would obviously be of great value. They further reported that the proposal in the Bill to prevent the sale of undersized flat fish would introduce certain harassing conditions upon those who carried on their business along the shore and in the smaller trawling vessels, and in those circumstances the Committee thought it would not be expedient for the Bill to pass without further investigation; but they added that they were confident that the question of the diminution of he fish supply was a very pressing one and that the situation was going from bad to worse. No effort, they thought, ought to be spared to provide especially for the regulation of the Nort Sea area and for the adequate equipment of the Government Department which had control of the subject. Since then the catch of fish has, it is true, not materially fallen off, but the area to which the vessels go—from Iceland in the North to Portugal in the South—has increased enormously, as also has the number of vessels engaged in the trade. Therefore I do not think that the former statistics are at all comparable with the statistics obtainable to-day.

If your Lordships are pleased to give this Bill a Second Reading I propose to ask you to send it to a Select Committee of this House, before whom I believe I shall be able to lay an amount of evidence which was not before the Committee of 1900, and which, if it had been before that Committee, would, I think, very materially have influenced their decision. This question is not one which is being brought forward by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries on its own mere notion. It has been pressed upon it on all sides by those who are interested in the fishing industry. It has been pressed upon it by the owners of those large fleets that go to the North Sea to pursue their business, and it has been pressed equally by the various fisheries committees throughout the Kingdom. A very large sum of public money is being expended in investigation and research. This country joined an International Conference which was to inquire, among other things, into the reason why the supply of flat fish in the North Sea was being gradually depleted. A sum of £42,000 has been voted to be expended in three years. The investigations are to last for a longer period than that, but for at least three years this country is committed to an expenditure of £42,000 in the aggregate for the purpose of those investigations. After that it will be necessary to reconsider our position. When that £42,000 was authorised there was no Department specially concerned with the administration of the fisheries. Certain statutory duties concerning the interests of the fishing population of England and Wales were entrusted to the Board of Trade. It was therefore thought advisable to hand this sum of money over to two existing bodies, to the Scottish Fisheries Board and to the Marine Biological Association. The latter is a scientific institution, whose headquarters are at Plymouth, which is primarily, in fact I think I may say entirely, a biological association managed and administered by biologists; they have directed the investigations under their control more particularly to the direction and the temperature of the currents in the North Sea plankton, and also to that curious floating organism which is the fish food found in all parts of the ocean; but they have not directed their attention, at any rate to any great extent, in the direction of ascertaining what are the sizes of the fish caught, the localities in which they are caught, where they pass the different periods of their lives, and where they can be caught with least detriment to this industry. These things have been rather, I think, put aside, and indeed our Minister at Copenhagen has represented to His Majesty's Government that, while England has by far the largest take of fish, she is the most backward in giving information on the subjects to which I have just directed your Lordships' attention. When the time comes for a reconsideration of the relationship of this country to the other countries taking part in the conference, at the end of the first three years, I think it will be necessary very carefully to consider whether those two bodies to whom the expenditure of Great Britain's very large pecuniary contribution is entrusted are those most competent to expend it wisely and well. In addition to this sum £1,600 a year is expended by the Department over which I have the honour to preside in ascertaining the total catch and the total value of the fisheries of this country, and a further £1,000 a year is given for scientific purposes to the Marine Biological Association. I am happy to say that, owing to the generosity of one of the great City Livery Companies—the Fishmongers' Company—we have had the advantage of having placed at our disposal facilities which have enabled us to prosecute inquiries a little further. Under those arrangements we have been able to ascertain the fish brought into the market at Billingsgate and to divide them into three classes—namely, "large," "medium," and "small," and carefully to analyse them. From these returns we find that, during the months of March to July inclusive, the fleets fishing in the area off the Danish coast, in the nighbourhood of Heligoland, took very large quantities of small plaice. In 1902 the proportion of these fish to the total take was 82·6 per cent. by weight and 71·8 per cent. by value; in 1903 it was 69·2 per cent. by weight and 56·2 per cent by value. The term "small plaice" is however, merely a market distinction and includes fish from six inches to fifteen inches in length.

The investigations which I have referred to were conducted so as to ascertain the average proportion of fish of each size in a box of small plaice obtained from these grounds. A sufficient number of boxes to constitute a fair sample of the whole were bought on the market, and their contents, consisting of over 40,000, were measured. Similarly a sufficient number of each length were weighed so as to establish the average relation between length and weight. The average contents of a box was thus established, and by applying such knowledge to the statistical returns it was found that the fleets fishing on the Eastern grounds referred to had in 1902 an average catch of over 40 per cent., and in 1903 over 36 per cent. by weight of plaice under ten inches, and, in 1902, of over 60 per cent., and in 1903, of 53 per cent. by weight of plaice under eleven inches. I think that conclusively proves that the vessels which go out to fish in this great nursery ground in the North Sea bring home a very large number of fish which, if they were allowed to grow to mature size, would enormously increase the amount of the food supply.

This Bill is of a somewhat elastic character, and I have so drafted it bcause the Icthyological Committee which sat in 1903 recommended that, in view of the difficulty of carrying out reliable investigations as to the effect of natural causes on the supply of fish, the effect of such operations on the fisheries could best be tested by regulating such operations experimentally, and it is experimentally that we desire to proceed in this Bill. I am sorry that my noble friend Lord Tweedmouth is not in his place, because he has taken a great interest, from the beginning, in all these fisheries questions. I have read carefully the objections which he advanced against the Bills that have been introduced in former years. One suggestion which he made was that this ought to be dealt with rather by international agreement than by legislation in this country. There is nothing in this Bill which will prevent our entering into any international agreement, but that is a matter involving considerable time and a great deal of waiting, and we cannot afford to wait in this matter. I think your Lordships will see that it is highly desirable that this country at any rate should proceed as rapidly as possible to do something to prevent the destruction of undersized fish in the great nursery grounds of the North Sea.

The Board of Agriculture, to which has been referred the duties of watching over the fisheries, has for many years been entrusted by Parliament with discretionary powers by way of Order. That was originally done in the case of diseases of animals, and the object of the Board, which has been completely attained, has been, not to force public opinion, but to endeavour, as far as possible, to follow and to live up to it. We have begun with Orders which, perhaps, have been by many people thought not sufficiently stringent. We have increased from time to time their stringency, and in the case of diseases of animals we are at present most loyally supported by those who are interested in agriculture, in our desire to stamp out the diseases which we have not already obliterated. It is in the same way that we hope to proceed by this Bill. If you look at Clause 1 you will observe that the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries are to be empowered to make Orders for the purpose of preventing the destruction of undersized flat fish, either absolutely or subject to such exemptions or conditions as may be prescribed.

The matters which we shall have to consider, and which the Committee will have to consider, are, first, what months in the year shall that prescription apply to; secondly, what is the class of vessels which shall be prohibited from landing undersized fish; and, thirdly, what shall be the size of fish the landing of which shall be prohibited. Under the former Bills it was an offence to sell any fish under a certain size, that size being prescribed in the Bill, and it was stated, with, I daresay, a great deal of truth, that as that applied indiscriminately to everybody engaged in fishing, it might work great hardship to the small people along the shore, who, although they may destroy a certain number of undersized fish, do nothing like the damage done by trawlers in the North Sea. The object of this Bill is to exempt many small boats catching undersized fish to an extent which is infinitesimal compared to the resources of the sea, but which may be of vital importance to the immediate owner in obtaining his livelihood. Such vessels may be found at Ramsgate, Brixham, and, indeed, all round the coast, and I do not propose to interfere with people getting such a livelihood. It is true that it is impossible to avoid catching these small fish if you go to the ground where they are, but we believe, from the evidence before us, that it will not be worth the while of the trawlers to go to these nurseries of small fish if you prevent them from landing them after they have been caught. They will go to other parts of the North Sea, and these nurseries will be preserved as breeding grounds for the fish.

Perhaps I may explain how it comes that this particular area is the breeding ground of the North Sea. The current is always running from West to East, the spawn of the fish floats in the water and is carried by the current into that angle between the North of Germany and Jutland; it cannot get any further and strikes up against the coast; the young fish are hatched out and travel back to the large banks adjoining Heligoland. If they are allowed to remain there a year undisturbed they become good sized fish, and swim out into the larger area of the North Sea. There is a clause in the Bill which gives power to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries to prevent trawling within a three mile limit of the shore; that power is already in the hands of the fisheries committees all round the coast. There are, I think, 1,700 miles of coast line, and there are some parts where the prohibitions might with advantage be extended. All we ask is that Parliament should give to us the same powers as are now possessed by fisheries committees all round the coast. It is high time that England should set an example to other countries. Other countries have passed limits for fish, but we have no undersized limit in this country. I am informed that there is no sale for undersized fish on the Continent, and certainly the first vessels we should prohibit landing fish on these shores would be foreign vessels bringing them in when English vessels are prevented from doing so.

We should first confine the prohibition to those steam carriers and large trawlers that go out to the North Sea. We are invited to do so by the great companies who own these trawlers and carriers, and I believe there is no difference of opinion amongst those who represent the great fishing interest upon this subject. The diminution of the fish food supply of this country is a very serious matter. It is one which at a very early date will inevitably come home to the population, particularly the poorer population, and unless something is done, at a very early date, my fear is that there will be a very serious diminution in the food supply of this country. This Bill is designed, as I have said, with a certain amount of elasticity, to enable us to proceed tentatively, so that if we make a false step we are able to retreat. I think the way in which the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries has been supported by the farming interest in this country is such that I may safely ask your Lordships to give it a certain discretion in this matter. The Bills that have been introduced before have not been very successful, but I earnestly hope, and confidently expect, that a measure of this kind, which will not interfere with the small shrimper and the longshoreman round the coast, while it will impose a self-denying ordinance on the owners of large steam trawlers and carriers, will meet with but little opposition. I therefore invite your Lordships to give it a Second Reading.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

LORD HENEAGE: My Lords, I wish to congratulate my noble friend on having put his shoulder to the wheel and brought forward this measure. Although it is a somewhat different measure from that brought forward in previous years, I, for my part, speaking as the President of the Sea Fisheries' Protection Association, prefer the lines on which it is drawn, because it is an enabling Bill; it is not a hard and fast measure. It will enable my noble friend who has the interest of sea fisheries and other fisheries to look after, to alter at various times his Orders by the light of experience, and that, I think, will be a very great gain, without having to go to Parliament. I do not propose to enter at all into those parts of my noble friend's speech in which he alluded to certain controversial subjects. These will be thoroughly threshed out in the Select Committee which he proposes to ask your Lordships to appoint. I should like to say that we who represent the sea fisheries industry do not look upon the Report of the Select Committee of 1900 with very much respect. We think it was rather a perfunctory examination of the question, and that the object of the Select Committee was rather more to cover the retreat of Mr. Ritchie in withdrawing his Bill than to get at any amount of satisfactory evidence. We prefer to go back to the Committee of 1893, presided over by my noble friend Lord Tweedmouth, which thoroughly threshed out this question and took evidence on all sides. The opposition to the Bill was very well managed, but, notwithstanding that, this very large Committee, representing England, Scotland, and Ireland, were unanimously of opinion that it was time something was done to stop the destruction of undersized fish; they were also unanimously of opinion that, considering all the proposals made to them, there was only one possible way of doing it, and that was to prevent the sale of undersized fish. It was on the Report of that Committee that all these Bills were brought in, first by Mr. Bryce, then by Mr. Ritchie, and afterwards by myself. They were all framed on the Report of this Committee which had thoroughly threshed out the question. We do not, as I say, pay very much attention to the Report of the Committee of 1900, as we think that the recommendation that more scientific evidence was required was against the weight of evidence. The Committee stated distinctly that one of the causes of this diminution of the fish supply was undoubedly the destruction of immature fish. Again they said—

> "Your Committee find that the subject of the diminution of the fish supply is a very pressing one, and the situation is going from bad to worse."

But, notwithstanding those statements, they decided that the measure should be postponed for want of more scientific evidence. We do not think that scientific evidence is of so very much importance. We think this a practical question, on which practical men who go out to the North Sea have a far better knowledge than these scientific professors.

This question has now been before the country for nearly twenty years. In 1888 and 1889 it was the subject of discussion before the Sea Fisheries' Association, when 200 delegates were present from England, Scotland, and Ireland; and in the following year there was also a large conference in which representatives were present from Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Spain, and they were absolutely unanimous with regard to the solution of the question, which was that the only possible chance was to stop the sale of undersized fish. My noble friend said just now that he thought a country like this ought to lead in promoting such legislation. Well, Mr. Ritchie, speaking seven years ago, made a very strong speech in favour of it, and he then said—

> "It is one of those questions on which other countries have moved, and on which we ought not to be behindhand."

That was seven years ago; therefore what we have to do now is to make up for lost time. I hope the Bill will not only be given a Second Reading, but that it will successfully pass through the Select Committee and the other House of Parliament. I have much pleasure, as President of the Sea Fisheries' Protection Association, in giving the Bill my support.

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and referred to a Select Committee.

RAILWAY RATES ON MILK AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE.

*THE EARL OF LICHFIELD : My Lords, I rise to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether any arrangements have been made by the Board with the railway companies with regard to the conditions affecting the carriage of milk and other agricultural produce. With regard to the latter part of my question—that which refers to other agricultural produce—I do not intend to trouble your Lordships at any length. It is a very complicated and difficult matter, and is chiefly, I imagine, a question of rates ; but, at the same time, it is one of vital importance to the whole agricultural interest in the United Kingdom, and I cannot help hoping that the negotiations which I believe have been going on between the Board of Agriculture and the railway companies may be successful from our point of view, and that the President of the Board of Agriculture will be able to announce that he has made satisfactory arrangements with those companies. But on the question affecting the carriage of milk, I should like to trouble your Lordships with a few words, because the conditions are so extremely unsatisfactory to the agricultural community, Your Lordships may be aware that the only way in which milk can be carried on the railways is either at the parcels rate, which is practically a prohibitive rate, or at the owner's risk rate. As a matter of fact, nearly the whole of the milk trade is carried on at the owner's risk rate, and the unfortunate farmer is allowed no compensation for loss or damage to his milk. The railway companies only undertake to compensate when it has been proved that their servants have been wilfully neglectful.

Those conditions are extremely unsatisfactory for the farmers, and I should like to read to your Lordships one or two typical cases. Here is the first. Milk duly consigned, carriage paid, takes eleven days to reach its destination — a distance of about 100 miles. The railway company, although repeatedly pressed, absolutely decline to make any compensation. Here is another case. Milk duly consigned, carriage paid, is spilt on the railway. The company admit this, but refuse to entertain a claim for compensation. The third case that I will quote is that of milk duly consigned, carriage paid, but never heard of again. The railway company said that they could find no trace whatever of the milk in question, and declined to give any compensation. I can assure your Lordships that those cases are typical of many hundreds throughout the kingdom, and what we hope the Board of Agriculture will be able to arrange is that the railway companies should admit responsibility and pay the farmer in cases of loss or damage.

I should like also to call attention to the exceedingly insanitary state of the milk vans in hot weather. I have heard of cases in which fish has been sent in the same van as milk, and also a live boar. Milk has also been sent in the same van as offal from slaughter-houses, the stink from which was said to be abominable.

The result is that in the hot weather the milk so sent is very liable to arrive at its destination sour and tainted, and is refused on that account by the consignee. What we desire is that there should be some special regulations under which milk should be carried in vans by itself, and that the vans should be properly cleaned and washed out. In many cases they are not swilled out half frequently enough. An individual farmer by himself is practically powerless to get any redress from the railway companies, and, as a consequence, many societies have, of late years, been started throughout the country to help the farmers in these and other matters, and representations have been made to the Board of Agriculture through these societies, giving cases of complaint, and urging the Board to take up this question on behalf of the farmers and endeavour to make more satisfactory arrangements with the railway companies.

I cannot help thinking that the railway companies will accede to a request put before them by such a powerful institution as the Board of Agriculture. Our railways are managed by able and sensible men, and I feel convinced that they will find it to their own interests to accede to those demands. The present conditions do not favour an increase in the milk trade, for farmers get discouraged. I am confident that if there were better regulations and more chance of farmers getting compensation when they suffer loss on the railway, the trade would be increased, and in the end the railway companies would benefit. There is one thing certain, that under present conditions the servants of railway companies know that their masters will not have to pay if they are careless, and the result is that they are extremely careless. If the railway companies undertook to pay for damage, they would very soon make their servants much more particular and careful in handling the milk, and, therefore, I do not think that in the end the companies would have to pay very much by way of compensation.

There is only one point further that I should like to submit to the President of the Board of Agriculture, and it is this. Is the noble Earl correctly reported as having said the other day that his Board intended at an early date to introduce a measure dealing with adulterated butter? I hope that may be so. We were all very much disappointed that no mention was made of the subject in His Majesty's most gracious Speech. It was alluded to last year, and a Bill dealing with the subject passed through several stages in the House of Commons; but, I suppose, mainly owing to the lamented death of Mr. Hanbury, and the dislocation that ensued at the Board of Agriculture, the Bill did not pass. I can assure the noble Earl that this is a very important matter, and one in respect of which we look to him for help. I hope that not only will a Bill be introduced, but that every effort will be made by the Government to get it passed into law this session.

LORD MONTEAGLE OF BRANDON: My Lords, this is a matter of vital concern to Ireland, as well as to England. The Irish farmers' grievance is even greater than that of the English farmer, and I have no doubt that if anything is done the benefits of that measure will be extended to Ireland. I should like to point out one or two special points where this matter touches us in Ireland. The question roughly divides itself into one of rates and one of facilities. The question of rates is not so much for the Board of Agriculture as for the Board of Trade; but with regard to the question of facilities, the difficulties of the position are very much aggravated for the Irish farmer by the breaking of bulk in crossing the channel. It is practically impossible for the Irish farmer to get any redress. In these cases where a grievance exists of goods being injured in transit by what must be gross negligence, there is a difficulty of bringing it home to any of the different companies concerned, because there are more than one of them. I believe that the law is that the receiving company alone is responsible, and once they have handed over the consignment to a steamship company their responsibility ceases. The person sending the goods has to proceed against the company that receives them from him, and he cannot get any redress, for all that the company has to do is to prove that it passed the goods on to another company. That is one of our grievances. As regards other agricultural produce, I believe there are also great difficulties in the matter of proper sanitary precautions and so forth for the cross channel traffic, both as regards milk, butter, and other perishable traffic, and the cattle trade. But perhaps this is also rather within the purview of the Board of Trade, and therefore I will not detain the House upon it. I only rose for the purpose of emphasising the importance of this matter to Ireland, and of making an appeal to His Majesty's Government that any benefits extended to English farmers should be extended also to Irish farmers.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: My Lords, perhaps I may be allowed to reply first to the Question which the noble Earl has put to me, but of which he did not give me notice—the question as to the introduction of a Bill for the regulation of the sale of butter. The Speech of His Gracious Majesty was, I think, of an unusual length, and perhaps butter was one of those subjects which might with best advantage be left out in the competition for mention in the King's Speech. As it had been generally announced in the country that the Government intended to reintroduce the Bill, I do not think any disappointment can have occurred in the minds of agriculturists. As a matter of fact, Mr. Fellowes, who represents the Board of Agriculture in the other House, has already given a promise to that effect, and he will introduce the Bill probably on Monday or Tuesday next, and it will then be printed and circulated. The noble Lord who has just sat down appealed that whatever was meted out to England should be meted out equally to Ireland. I am afraid I must say that in my opinion the Irish farmer is in a much better position, so far as regards funds, than the English farmer. We in England are always trying to get a little money out of the Treasury, whereas the Irish farmer has a very large sum of money at the disposal of the Agricultural Department in Ireland; and, more than that, he has one of the ablest representatives to deal with the matter in Mr. Horace Plunkett, and I am sure that in his hands the interests of Irish farmers have no chance of being neglected.

So far as the general question is concerned, I have been in correspondence with all the railway companies in England for some time past on the subject of facilities for agricultural traffic, and I shall hope, in the course of a few days, to lay upon the Table of both Houses of Parliament the correspondence which has taken place between us. Naturally, attention has been given to that very important trade, the milk trade. As the noble Lord has informed your Lordships, there are two rates—the owner's risk rate and the company's risk rate—and there is a material difference in the amount of the two. Not unnaturally the farmer prefers the lower rate, and the companies, when asked to compensate for loss, reply that if the owner chooses to send the goods at his own risk he must take the loss. However, I am glad to say that in this matter, at any rate, the companies have been disposed to meet the agriculturists as fairly as could reasonably be expected. They tell me that whilst they must maintain their legal position in regard to traffic conveyed at owner's risk, it is their practice, in a friendly way, to consider on its merits every case of total loss, wilful pilfering, or misdelivery. I should have thought that the can of milk that went astray for eleven days did so owing to misdelivery, and I am surprised that the company refused to entertain the application for compensation. But it must be remembered that this is *ex gratia* and not a legal position that can be enforced.

There is, I am afraid, a disposition to think that the Board of Agriculture can do a great deal more than they can. The only effective weapon is in the hands of every individual Member of Parliament, that is, to invite Parliament to refuse to consider any Bill which a particular company may put on the Table of the House unless they do so and so. That would be a strong step, and one which would not be supported in the country unless it was shown that the company treated those who sent produce by that railway in a manner which was manifestly inequitable and unfair. I have been lately considering whether it would not be to the greater advantage of farmers to send their goods at owner's risk, but to insure them. I believe that the difference between owner's risk, plus insurance, would be considerably less than if transmitted at company's risk, and I think that is worthy of their consideration. Farmers are, of course, entitled to ask that such a very delicate product as milk shall not be mixed up with anything which might easily taint it, such as fish. I can assure your Lordships that the Board of Agriculture have not lost sight of this very important question, but are in negotiation with the companies; and I hope to be able to show you exactly what the nature of those negotiations has been in the course of a very few weeks.

THE CASE OF CAPTAIN HARRISON.

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I beg to ask His Majesty's Government what has been the result of the further communication which has been addressed by the Board of Trade to the Canadian Government relative to the case of Captain Harrison, of the ss. "Grecian," who successfully appealed in this country against the suspension of his certificate in Canada, but was required to pay the costs of his appeal; and whether there is now any probability of Captain Harrison being recouped the costs referred to.

LORD WOLVERTON: My Lords, in answer to the Question of my hon. friend I have to state that the circumstances of the case of the "Grecian," to which the noble Lord refers, were put by the Colonial Office to the Canadian Government. After careful consideration, the decision of the Canadian Government is that, as the master neglected to avail himself of his right of appeal to the Minister of Marine and Fisheries in Canada, it is not considered that any obligation rests upon that Government to repay his expenses.

THE STRANDING OF THE "ISLE OF LEWIS" AND THE "DRUMBAIN."

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I beg to ask His Majesty's Government what were the circumstances attending the stranding of the steamer "Isle of Lewis," which drove ashore near Plymouth in October last; whether she was in ballast, and became unmanageable; and whether any formal investigation into the cause of the serious damage to this steamer has been held. Also, whether, in regard to the court of inquiry which investigated the circumstances attending the stranding of the steamer "Drumbain" in October last, any opinion was expressed by the court as to this disaster being caused by this vessel being light and in improper trim.

LORD WOLVERTON: My Lords, the noble Lord has raised two cases—the case of the "Isle of Lewis" and that of the "Drumbain." In the case of the "Isle of Lewis," the vessel took shelter in Plymouth in what may be described as a "whole gale" and was brought to an anchor. The master, however, found that the berth was likely to be a foul one owing to the proximity of another large steamer, and he hove up his anchors and navigated the vessel to what he considered a safer berth. In letting go the anchors a second time, a terrific squall struck the vessel and turned her broadside on to wind and sea, with the result that she dragged her anchors and finally went on the rocks. No lives were lost. A preliminary inquiry was held, but no formal investigation, as the severity of the weather accounted for the vessel dragging her anchors. With regard to the "Drumbain," the court of inquiry stated their opinion that the vessel being light, and five feet by the stern, the sea and wind prevented her making good her course. This goes to show that, in setting the course, allowance should have been made for the drift caused by wind and sea; and, as such allowance was not made, the vessel did not make good her course. No lives were lost.

House adjourned at twenty minutes past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 16th February, 1904.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Crystal Palace District Gas Bill; Great Northern Railway Bill; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order No. 63 has been complied with, viz.:—Brixham Gas Bill. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

SUBSTITUTED BILL [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in respect of the following Bill introduced pursuant to the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and which the Chairman of Ways and Means had directed to originate in the House of Lords, he has certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with, viz.:—Govan Burgh (Electricity) (Substituted) Bill [Lords].

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petitions for the following Bills, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—London United Tramways; London United Tramways (Railways); Middlesborough, Stockton-on-Tees, and Thornaby Tramways. Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, he has certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in the following case, viz.:—Bristol Tramways (Extensions).

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz:—Bristol Tramways (Extensions).

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Chippenham Gas Bill; Colney Hatch Gas Bill; London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Rickmansworth and Uxbridge Valley Water Bill. To be read a second time tomorrow.

Donegal Railway Bill (by Order) Read a second time, and committed.

Metropolitan Common Scheme (Hillingdon East) Provisional Order. Bill to confirm a Scheme with respect to Norman's or No Man's Land, Hillingdon. East, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes and Mr. Victor Cavendish.

Metropolitan Common Scheme (Farnborough) Provisional Order. Bill to confirm an amended Scheme with respect to Farnborough Common, Broad Street Green, Leach's Green, and Green Street Green, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes and Mr. Victor Cavendish.

Metropolitan Common Scheme (Hillingdon East) Provisional Order Bill. "To confirm a Scheme with respect to Norman's or No Man's Land, Hillingdon East," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 62.]

Metropolitan Common Scheme (Farnborough) Provisional Order Bill. "To confirm an amended Scheme with respect to Farnborough Common, Broad Street Green, Leach's Green, and Green Street Green," presented, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 63.]

PETITIONS.

LICENCES (RENEWAL).

Petitions against alteration of Law; from Stockton on Tees; Armadale; Cynog; Samybridge; Southend on Sea; Hay; Goshen; Lower Mont; Bradford; Wellingborough; Macclesfield; Rotherham; Churchill; Nottingham; Clifton; Ashton; Ashton under Lyne (two); Inverary; Oldham; Ayr; Beaumaris; Oban; Rugby; Erith; Dartford (two); Leicester (three); Tunbridge Wells; Corwen; Limehouse; Grassmoor; New Houghton; Mansfield; Mansfield Woodhouse; Sherwood Forest; Paynton; North Petherton; Manchester; Bo'ness; Bathgates; Boscombe; Elsecar; Hoyland Common; Brynmawr; Beaufort; Garth; Llanwrtyd; Rhesyear; Newtown; Philipstoun; Fauldhouse; Chelsea (two); Ireston; Erith; Preston; Cwmtwrch; Irvine; Bath; Bridgwater; Openshaw; Norwood; Ecclesfield; Clun; Blackridge; Burnley; Winchburgh; Freesall; Brandeston; Uddingstone; Harthill; Tulse Hill and Norwood; Maesffynon; Pencae; Abermeurig; Wern; Peniel; Tibshelf; Aber; Borth; Blaenpennal; Stapleford; Thornton Heath; Blaenanerch; Chatham (two); Holm; Birkenhead; Penrhiw; Lampeter; Brynseion; Dewi Brefi; Bwlchyllan; Llechryd; Pontsaeson; Plymouth; Aberayron; Nuneaton; Hednesford; Seaton Delaval; Leslie; Necton; Ponteroyd; Aberarth (two); Bournemouth; Wigan (two); and Swansea; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CHELSEA HOSPITAL.

Account presented, for the year ended 31st March, 1903, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 56.]

ARMY (ORDNANCE FACTORIES) (APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT).

Appropriation Account presented, of the sums granted by Parliament for the expense of the Ordnance Factories, the cost of the productions of which have been charged to the Army, Navy, and Indian and Colonial Governments, etc., and the Statement of the Surpluses and Deficits upon the Grants for the year ended 31st March, 1903, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 57.]

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS.

Copy presented, of Twelfth Annual Report of the Proceedings of the Inspection Committee for the year ended 20th November, 1903, with Appendix [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 58.]

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of December, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

INEBRIATES' ACTS, 1879 TO 1899 (REGULATIONS) (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Regulations for State Inebriate Reformatories in Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 3, 1904).

Copy presented, of Agreement between the United Kingdom and Italy, providing for the settlement by Arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the two Governments. Signed at Rome, 1st February, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TARIFF WARS (COMMERCIAL, No. 1, 1904).

Copy presented, of Reports on Tariff Wars between certain European States [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AFRICA (No. 2, 1904).

Copy presented, of Report on the Trade and Commerce of the Somaliland Protectorate for the year 1902–3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AFRICA (No. 3, 1904).

Copy presented, of Correspondence respecting the introduction of Chinese Labour into the Transvaal [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Trade "Corners"—Amendment of Gaming Act.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the results of the cotton corner, he will consider the advisability of introducing a measure to amend the Gaming Act of 1892, so as to prohibit what is termed bear selling and render illegal fictitious contracts in options, futures, and warrants, and making the differences irrecoverable at law.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I am not prepared to recommend legislation on this subject.

Refusals of Publicans' Licences.

Mr. CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state in how many cases in England and Wales the renewal of victuallers' licences was refused last year on the ground that they were not required (after allowing for the results of appeals); and what proportion this number bears to the total number of such licences.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The only information in my possession on the points put by the hon. Member is contained in the Return of Licences Refused issued last year (Parliamentary Paper No. 194). From the summary of that Return it appears that in 167 cases the licensing justices refused the renewal of victuallers' licences on the ground that they were not required. For the purposes of the appeal figures it is not possible to distinguish between those cases and the 169 other cases in which licences were refused on the ground that they were not required, coupled with other grounds. Taking these 336 refusals together it may be estimated from the body of the Return that in about 100 cases an appeal was allowed. This would leave about 230 cases in which the licences were finally refused; and, on the figures shown in the last annual Report of the Board of Inland Revenue, viz.: 67,055 victuallers' licences granted in the year 1902–3, the proportion would be about one in 290.

Publication of Civil Service Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury when the Civil Service Supplementary Estimates will be in the hands of Members.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The Civil Service Supplementary Estimates have been circulated to-day.

Colonial Life Insurances and Income-Tax Rebate.

Sir SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that the privilege granted to Income-Tax payers, resident in this country, of exemption on premiums of life assurance policies is restricted to policies issued by companies whose head offices are in the United Kingdom, and is not applicable to policies issued by companies established in other parts of the Empire, as in India, Australia, and Canada, he will consider the propriety of extending this privilege to the policies of all Indian and Colonial life assurance companies, which are now treated as foreigners.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Legislation is required in order to extend to Indian and Colonial insurance companies the exemption from Income-Tax on premiums which is granted to insurance offices in the United Kingdom. I am making inquiries into the conditions under which insurance companies carry on their business in the respective Colonies and in India, with a view to finding out whether in each case the same treatment is accorded to companies with local head offices and companies with head offices in the United Kingdom. Until I am in possession of the result of those inquiries I am unable to make any definite statement as to legislation.

Dismissal of Newtown Stewart Postmaster.

Mr. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he can state the grounds of the dismissal of W. H. West from the postmastership of Newtown Stewart, in the county of Tyrone; and whether it is his intention, having regard to the importance of the

Newtown Stewart post office district, to appoint an official of the Post Office to the vacant position.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Mr. West's office was declared vacant in consequence of certain frauds having occurred in the office which were rendered possible by his general carelessness and laxity of supervision. I have not yet selected a successor, and I am unable to say whether he will be an officer already in the service or not.

Carriage of Mails between Limerick and Tralee.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state the amount the Waterford and Limerick Railway Company, previous to amalgamation with the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, were receiving from the postal authorities for the carriage of the mails between Limerick and Tralee; how much the latter company now require in order to continue to run trains for the carriage of the mails in this district at hours suitable to the postal authorities; how much have the authorities agreed to pay; and if he will state the amount the company are now receiving for the carriage of some of the mails in this district, and what does the service comprise.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The payment to the Waterford, Limerick, and Western Railway Company for conveyance of mails previous to the amalgamation of that company with the Great Southern and Western Railway Company was £1,500 a year, for which a suitable train service was provided. The agreement was terminated by the company at about the time of the amalgamation, and the Great Southern and Western Company demanded £7,161 a year for the maintenance of the former trains. My predecessor was prepared to continue payment on the former terms; but, in view of the refusal of the company to reduce their demand for a suitable service, he had no alternative but to send those mails by railway for which suitable trains were run by the company for their own traffic, and to make the best provision possible for forwarding by road the remainder of the mails. Negotiations are still proceeding with the company as to the payment for the conveyance of those mails which are now sent by railway. The present service by railway includes the conveyance of the day mails in each direction, of the night mails for places between Tralee and Templeglantine, and also of the up-night mails to Limerick on week days.

Appointment of British Consuls at Mukden, Antung, and Tatungkau.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any appointments are to be made, or have been made, of British Consuls at Mukden, Antung, and Tatungkau.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) Consular officers will be appointed at Mukden and Antung. Tatungkau will be included in the Consular district of Antung.

Russian Tonnage Dues at Port Arthur.

MR. MOON: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Consul at Niu-chwang has yet furnished a report upon the differential tonnage dues imposed by the Russian authorities at Port Arthur; and, if not, when it is expected.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) A report has been received and is now under consideration.

Coal Tax—Report of Commission on Coal Supplies.

SIR GEORGE NEWNES (Swansea Town): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, on the completion of the evidence with regard to the coal tax before the Royal Commission on our Coal Supplies, he will ask the Commission to furnish a special interim Report on this part of the question.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) No, Sir; I do not propose to make any representation to the Commissioners in regard to the procedure which they should follow.

Officers' Uniform in the Indian Army.

SIR SEYMOUR KING: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that under the regulations lately issued regarding changes of uniform in the Indian Army, officers in the supply and transport corps have had to purchase a new uniform costing about £60, which they only wear once or twice a year on official occasions, such as a Viceroy's levee; and whether, in view of the official desire to reduce to a minimum the necessary expenses of officers in the Indian Army, he will consider the advisability of substituting for use in India a simpler uniform of khaki or other material suitable to the climate and less expensive.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) All the Orders issued in 1902–3 regarding changes in uniform in the Indian Army provided that tunics then in use might be continued in wear, without alteration, until worn out. The adoption of a new pattern of full dress uniform, as suggested by the hon. Member, would entail considerable expenditure on every officer of the Indian Army affected. As regards the latter part of the Question, officers wear the same coloured uniform as the rank and file of their regiments, and it would be inadvisable to make a change in this respect.

The Royal Indian Marines.

SIR SEYMOUR KING: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been directed by the Government of India to complaints brought by petition to the Viceroy, in October, 1902, from the whole of the executive officers in the Royal Indian Marines of the block in promotion and other disabilities affecting their position, especially in promotion to the rank of third grade commander; is he aware of the rate of pay of full lieutenants of six years standing, and of the fact that there are lieutenants of seventeen years service in receipt of only Rs. 250 *per mensem*; is he aware of the rates of leave pay in England and expenses of uniform on promotion, and that a navigating officer has to share with the Commander the responsibility for the safe navigation of his ship, but receives no increased emoluments; and, if so, will he state whether any reply has been made to these representations; and, if not, whether the Indian Government will favourably consider some revision of these rates of pay.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The memorials of the executive officers of the Royal Indian Marine have been under consideration for some time, and I have sanctioned certain measures which I hope will improve the conditions of service of those officers. These will be announced in India shortly.

Appointment of Irish Dispensary Doctors.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will consent to the repeal of Section 6 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1902, with a view to the settlement of the difficulty which has arisen in Ireland regarding the appointment of dispensary doctors.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The necessity for this section of the Act was explained by me in the Committee Stage of the Measure on the 12th December, 1902. I cannot for the reasons then stated agree to the repeal of the section.

Amalgamation of Irish Unions.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if it is in contemplation to amalgamate any of the Irish unions; and, if so, whether, before any amalgamations are decided upon, local inquiries will be publicly held by an independent tribunal similar to the Appeal Commission under the Local Government Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The general question of the amalgamation of unions is at present the subject of investigation by the Poor Law Commission appointed in May last. A considerable volume of evidence has already been taken in public by the Commission, but until its Report has been presented I am unable to say whether further inquiry will be necessary before effect can be given to any recommendations made by the Commission.

Irish National School Teachers.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say (1) how many male principal teachers of the first division of the first class having incomes (exclusive of residual capitation grant) exceeding £127, and whose average attendance for the previous calendar year was not less than seventy, were in the service of the National Board on the 1st April, 1900 (the date of the introduction of the new system of payments to national teachers); (2) how many of such teachers joined the first of first grade; (3) how many of such teachers did not join the first of first grade; (4) why did not the last-mentioned teachers join the first of first grade according to Rule 200 (e) (5); and (5) why have the last-mentioned teachers (who got good reports) been awarded their increments for the triennial period just ended.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) (1) 265. (2) 197. (3) sixty-eight. (4) and (5). They were not eligible under rule by actual income for joining first of first grade. After the termination of three years from 1st April, 1900, six of these teachers had left the service. Of the remaining sixty-two, eight were promoted to first of first grade from 1st April, 1903; eighteen were not promoted because the average attendance at their schools had fallen below seventy; twenty-eight were not promoted because they could not be recommended by the inspectors, as they did not fulfil the necessary conditions for promotion; and eight were not promoted because the reports on their schools for the preceding three years were not sufficiently satisfactory.

Inquiry into Conduct of Sergeant Byrne of Hookeen.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state what decision was arrived at some time ago respecting the Court of Inquiry instituted into the conduct of Sergeant Byrne, of Hookeen, Loughrea; and will he lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the evidence given on the occasion.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Court of Inquiry found the accused not guilty of the charges preferred against him, and the Inspector-General concurred in the finding of the Court. It it not proposed to lay a Copy of the evidence upon the Table.

North Dublin Union—Supposed Death of an Inmate.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 30th January last a female patient in the infirmary of the North Dublin Union was reported dead; that the nurses in charge who were leaving the premises at the time gave instructions for the body to be removed to the mortuary and doctor's certificate to be made out which was done, and that subsequently, on the removal of another corpse from the mortuary, it was found that the woman was still living; and will he order an inquiry into the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) My hon. friend has been misinformed. The Question has no foundation in fact.

Buncrana Sewerage Scheme.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the plans for the Buncrana sewerage scheme have been as yet amended and approved of by the Local Government Board; and, if not, what is the cause of the delay in not having these works proceeded with.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Board on the 22nd January returned to the district council for amendment a plan for this sewerage scheme, and requested that a specification with estimate and plans in detail might be furnished. These have not yet been supplied to the Board.

Discharge of Sewage into Thames at Sheerness.

SIR JOSEPH DIMSDALE (London): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware of the state of the sewage now being discharged into the River Thames from the military establishments at Sheerness and elsewhere, notwithstanding that the attention of the Secretary of State was, in March, 1903, called to the subject by the Corporation of London as the Port Sanitary Authority; and whether he will state what steps he proposes to take to prevent the continuance of discharge of sewage in its present state.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster*). My attention has been drawn to the matter alluded to in the Question. As a similar state of affairs exists all along the lower river in the case of the civil population it is considered inexpedient that the War Department should take action separately from the local civil authorities affected.

Publication of Army Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. BUCHANAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War when the Army Supplementary Estimates will be in the hands of Members.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) This Estimate will be in the hands of Members on Thursday next.

Appointment of Dental Surgeons to First Army Corps.

Sir CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has any official reports upon the appointment of two dental surgeons to First Army Corps; and whether he will state if it is proposed to increase their number.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) Owing to the satisfactory nature of the reports on the employment of dental surgeons it has been decided to employ eight dentists with the troops serving at Home stations.

Condemned War Office Forage.

Sir CARNE RASCH: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the War Office have taken steps to recover the loss on the condemned forage from Prentis the contractor; why Prentis was allowed to contract for the War Office; whether the Department had any security that the obligation would be carried out; and whether the Department was aware that Underwood was the real contractor in this transaction.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The necessary steps to recover the loss mentioned are being taken by the legal advisers of the War Department. With regard to the question of Mr. Prentis being allowed to contract with the Department, there was no reason whatever to suppose that he had any connection with Messrs. Underwood, or that the latter was the real contractor. As regards security it is not the custom of the Department to require security outside the terms of the contract for the fulfilment of contract obligations in regard to supplies.

Unauthorised Private Circulation to Members of Parliament of Lord Milner's Despatches.

Mr. BROADHURST (Leicester): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a printed circular, without date, signature, or printer's name, sent by post to Members of Parliament containing the substance of Despatches Nos. 91 and 92 from Lord Milner to the Colonial Secretary, the delivery being made a day or two before the issue of the Blue-book containing these despatches to this House; and, if so, whether he will make inquiries into the means by which the despatches were intercepted and copied by unknown persons.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I have no information on this subject, but I will make inquiries and shall be much assisted in doing so if the hon. Member can supply me with a copy of the circular to which he refers.

Censorship of Private Correspondence in the Transvaal.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the power referred to by his predecessor on the 29th April, 1903, of intercepting and opening letters, documents, and parcels in the Transvaal has been exercised during the last six months; and, if so, in how many instances; and has the proposed amendment of the Ordinance been carried out.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*) I am making inquiry by telegraph as to the various points raised by the hon. Member.

The Agricultural Rates Act.

Sir WALTER THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view o the early expiration of the Agricultural Rating Act, it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill to extend its term or alternatively to make it a permanent enactment.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Perhaps my hon. friend will allow me to answer this Question. The period of the continuance of the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, was extended in 1901 until the 31st March, 1906, and the Government do not propose to introduce legislation on the subject during the present session.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Imperial Service Order.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will give directions for the publication in the Army List, in the same way as already published in the Navy List respecting naval officers, of a list of officers of the Army and Auxiliary Forces upon whom His Majesty the King has conferred the Imperial Service Order.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): Instructions have been given that the names of recipients of the Imperial Service Order shall in future be shown in the Army List.

War Office Reorganisation.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when does he propose to take the opinion of this House on the scheme for the reorganisation of the War Office.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The Government will be glad to give the House an opportunity of discussing the scheme of the reorganisation of the War Office when the course of business allows. The Committee, however, have not yet completed their Report, and it will be obviously inconvenient to discuss the scheme proposed by them except as a whole. The reorganisation of the War Office is an administrative matter, and for the most part does not require legislative sanction; but the transfer to the Council of certain statutory powers vested in the Secretary of State for War must be effected by Act of Parliament. Probably it will be convenient to raise a discussion on the introduction of the Bill which must be brought forward for this purpose. I shall be glad if the right hon. Gentleman will raise the Question again when the Prime Minister returns to the House.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Will the discussion of the part of the Report dealing with the Cabinet Committee of Defence be in order on that Bill.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I do not know how far the Orders of the House will allow it, but I believe there are proposals in this first part which will require legislation.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: Will any money be asked for and will any statement be made by the right hon. Gentleman in introducing the Estimates.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No money will be required at this stage, and I doubt whether it will be required at a later stage. But if I find that money is required I will make a statement. My opinion at present is that no money will be required.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what provision has been made for the officers whose services at the War Office have been dispensed with under the new scheme; what arrangements have been made for the conduct of business during the period of transition from the old system to the new, and to secure that the Department may be prepared for any national emergency which may arise.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, at the special request of the Prime Minister, has consented to place his services at the disposal of the Committee of Imperial Defence. General Sir Henry Brackenbury has retired at the conclusion of his period of service. General Sir William Nicholson, whose period of service would have expired on 1st May of the present year, has been specially selected to be attached to the Japanese forces during the present war, to represent the Intelligence Department. No further appointments of the nature referred to in the Question have been made at present. Arrangements have been made for the conduct of business during the period of transition from the old system to the new, and it is not anticipated that the work of the Department will be interrupted. I may remind my hon. friend that the patent constituting the new authority was only sealed on the 8th inst., and that the first meeting of the Army Council was held yesterday.

South African War Medals.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when the medals and clasps given for the South African War will be all issued, including those for the South African regiments raised in South Africa.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am afraid that it is not possible to say when the issue of these medals and clasps will be completed. Medal rolls are still coming in and there are several more to come, great difficulty being experienced in some cases in finding officers who can prepare and certify rolls. I do not think in this case there has been any undue or unavoidable delay.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: Is it not the fact that some regiments which went right through the war have not yet received sufficient medals?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: If the hon. Member can inform me of any cases I will inquire if they come under the exceptional cases I have mentioned.

Malta and Gibraltar Barracks Sanitary Condition.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will communicate to the House the reports made by the officers commanding the Royal Engineers and principal medical officers at Malta and Gibraltar upon the sanitary condition of the barracks in those commands in the years 1900, 1901, 1902, and 1903, and state what steps have been taken to remedy the evils brought to notice in those reports regarding the structural defects of the buildings and the need for improved water supply for the use of the troops.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The reports in question are confidential. I can, however, assure the House that the proper steps are being taken to remedy the various defects. Large sums of money have been spent in the improvements of these barracks. The only serious cases of the nature referred to by the hon. Member which have been brought to notice are:—Gibraltar: Brewery Barracks reported as insanitary. These are about to be replaced. Malta: Fort Manoel reported as being in an insanitary condition. This will be evacuated as soon as a third Infantry battalion barrack can be built at Pembroke Camp. As regards the water supply only a few defects have been reported and they have been or are being remedied.

Effects of Deceased Soldiers.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that a watch, the property of the late Quartermaster-Sergeant J. Macleod, which was handed over by the hospital authorities at Klerksdorp to Lieutenant W. Gates, late of the 14th Company Imperial Yeomanry, for despatch to the deceased soldier's father, resident in Ross-shire, has failed to reach its destination; whether, seeing that, although Lieutenant Gates states that the parcel was registered and posted at Klerksdorp about the end of March, 1902, he is unable to produce the registered receipt issued in such cases, and that the post office authorities at Klerksdorp deny all knowledge of the parcel, he will consider the expediency of granting compensation; and will he state the nature of the War Office regulations which govern the disposal of the personal effects of soldiers dying on active service in the field, and will he state under what authority Lieutenant Gates acted.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It has already been decided to grant £2 as compensation for the watch and a belt, and orders have been given for the money to be paid. Under the Regimental Debts Act, 1893, any effects not disposed of locally are sent to the next of kin, and the watch in question was handed to Lieutenant Gates for this purpose. Considerable operations were in progress in the Klerksdorp district of the Transvaal at the time in question and means of communication were uncertain.

Rosyth Naval Base.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether, in connection with the naval base at Rosyth on the Forth, sufficient land has been acquired for the erection of dwellings for the officers and workpeople; and whether it is intended to lay out the ground on hygienic principles, to prevent overcrowding, and secure abundance of light and air.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARTHUR LEE, Hampshire, Fareham): The plans of the Admiralty are not sufficiently advanced to allow of any definite information being given as to the utilisation of the land, but a portion of it will probably be available for workmen's dwellings. The Admiralty have not at present any intention of erecting such dwellings themselves, but they will take care that any dwellings erected on their property are arranged and constructed with due regard to hygienic principles.

Indian Police Service.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Report of the Commission on Indian Police Organisation which took evidence last year, and the resolution thereon of the Governor-General in Council, will be placed before Parliament early this session; and whether the recommendations of that Commission include proposals for admission, by promotion or otherwise, of experienced Indian members of that service to any of its three higher grades, or any modifications of the present system under which youthful Europeans, selected in this country without previous knowledge of India and its races, are, on appointment, posted directly to the higher ranks of the police service.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I do not anticipate that it will be possible to lay the Report of the Indian Police Commission before Parliament early this session, or to make any statement on the subject, as I must await the recommendations of the Government of India. The whole subject is being carefully considered in communication with the local governments.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: Will the right hon. Gentleman be able to give the House the information before the debate on the Budget?

MR. BRODRICK: Which debate?

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: The debate on the Indian Budget—at the end of the session?

MR. BRODRICK: I will do my best.

The Transvaal Labour Ordinance—Protests.

MR. JOHN ELLIS (Nottinghamshire Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the House is now in possession of all the various protests from public authorities, departments, and associations in South Africa respecting the introduction of Chinese labour which have been received by his Department; and, if not, will he place those not yet communicated before the House.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): A few adverse resolutions from the Cape and one from Lydenburg in the Transvaal have reached me since Cd. 1895 was published, but they were not in time to be added to the further Papers which were circulated yesterday.

MR. JOHN ELLIS was understood to ask what bodies sent in the adverse resolutions.

[The reply was inaudible.]

Copy of the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

MR. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies where a complete and accurate copy of the Ordinance respecting Chinese labour in the Transvaal as it finally left the

Transvaal Legislative Council can be found.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: The Ordinance, reconstructed as far as is known accurately, will be found in Cd. 1898. Lord Milner has telegraphed that no further Amendments have been introduced, and there is, consequently, no doubt that this amended version of the Ordinance correctly represents the Legislature actually passed. The amended version has been circulated for some days.

Transvaal Recruiting and Transit Regulations.

Mr. JOHN ELLIS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is now in possession of and will communicate to the House the steps which Lord Milner proposes should be taken with regard to recruiting labour in China for the Transvaal so as to ensure that before the labourers leave China they are made fully aware of the specific wages they are to be paid and of the very special restrictions under which their labour is to be performed.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: Lord Milner informs me that it is certainly intended that the Transvaal Government shall exercise the closest supervision over arrangements for recruitment and treatment of labourers in transit, and that it has been thought advisable to await arrival of Evans before drawing up the terms upon which license to import will be granted, and to be advised by him in regard to all details as to the qualifications of agents, the methods of recruitment, and treatment on voyage. These will be embodied in regulations under the Ordinance as well as in license.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): How can the Transvaal Government enforce any regulation with regard to sea transport? Must it not be done by Imperial regulation?

*Mr. LYTTELTON: The position is this: negotiations are now in progress with the Chinese Government. One of the demands of the Chinese Government was with reference to sea transit, and there would be no sort of difficulty in making proper arrangements with regard to transit with that Government.

Mr. BUCHANAN: Still it must be arranged by the Imperial Government and not by the Transvaal.

Barbados as a Recruiting Ground for Native Labour for the Transvaal.

Mr. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he has received communications from any of His Majesty's representatives in the West Indies informing him that British native labour is available there for the Transvaal Colony; if so, will he state the purport of such communication, and what reply has been made to it.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: I have received a despatch from the Governor of Barbados asking whether he may permit steps to be taken for recruiting labourers in Barbados for service in South Africa. No reply has yet been made to this despatch pending reference to Lord Milner on the subject.

Mr. NORMAN: In sending the despatch did the Governor of Barbados express any opinion as to the desirability or otherwise?

*Mr. LYTTELTON: Yes.

Mr. NORMAN: In favour?

*Mr. LYTTELTON: Yes, Sir.

Mr. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): Did he say how many recruits he could get?

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Has the import of labourers into Barbados been stopped?

[No answer was returned.]

British Workmen and the Transvaal Labour Ordinance.

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any official information to the effect that a party of British workmen who sailed for England from the Cape last Wednesday, have been dismissed from their employment on the Rand mines for having refused to sign a petition in favour of Chinese labour.

*MR. LYTTELTON: No, Sir; but I have to-day received the following telegram from Lord Milner:—I am requested to transmit to you by telegraph following resolution passed unanimously at a general meeting of Association of Mine Managers of the Witwatersrand held today: Begins—Resolved that the Association of Mine Managers having read Mr. Herbert Samuel's Question in the House of Commons regarding the dismissal of British workmen from the Witwatersrand mines because of their refusal to sign pro-Chinese petition, emphatically state that nothing of the kind ever took place. Upwards of 7,000 mine workmen signed the petition and neither on these nor on the 4,000 to 5,000 who did not, was any pressure directly or indirectly brought to bear—Ends.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: May I say that my Question was based on a telegram from the Cape correspondent of—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Transvaal Legislative Council and the Ordinance.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received from Lord Milner a despatch giving the reason which induced the Legislative Council of the Transvaal drastically to amend the Labour Ordinance; and when he will put the House in possession of these reasons.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I have not yet received such a despatch from Lord Milner; I will lay it on the Table when I have received it. I do not consider the Amendments to have been of a drastic character.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Whether drastic or not no explanation has been sent.

Cost of Cable Transvaal Ordinance Amendments.

MR. NORMAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what was the cost of the telegram No. 4 (Cd. 1898), addressed by Governor Viscount Milner to himself, No. 2 of the 5th February, containing the Amendments to the draft Ordinance concerning Chinese labour in the Transvaal Colony.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The cost was about £150.

Chinese Government and the Transvaal Labour Question.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Chinese Government has now given its assent to the proposed recruiting of Chinese labour for the Transvaal under the conditions laid down in the Labour Ordinance.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): As I stated in reply to a Question by the hon. Member for Cleveland yesterday,† His Majesty's Government have been informed by the Chinese Minister that the draft Ordinance contains nothing which is likely to conflict with the proposals he may have to make when the time comes for negotiating the regulations provided for in the Treaty of Pekin. Papers on the subject are being laid.

Ex Soldiers in the Postal Service.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can state what Army Service men who took Post Office service during 1891 and 1892, under what was termed the Ferguson Act, are entitled to add to Post Office service for assessment of pension.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I do not know to what Act of Parliament the hon. Member's Question refers; but if he will give me fuller particulars I shall be happy to give him the information he desires. I may, however, state that the various schemes, which have from time to time been put in force for the employment of soldiers in the Post Office, have never included any arrangements for adding military service to Post Office service for the assessment of pension.

New Lady Inspector in the Potteries.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state what will be the duties of the new lady inspector in the Potteries, at whose request has she been appointed, and what will be her position in relation to the present inspector of the district.

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† See page 1324.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): The duties of the lady inspector, who has by my directions, been detailed from the existing staff to spend some time in the Potteries district, are to secure the observance, so far as regards the employment of women and girls, of the provisions of the Factory and Truck Acts generally, and, in particular, of the Special Rules now in force in the industry. She will act in concert with the district inspector under the general instructions laid down for the lady inspectors.

MR. COGHILL: How long is the lady inspector to remain at the Potteries?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: As long as is deemed necessary.

MR. COGHILL: On whose recommendation was she sent there?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I determined to send her there because I thought it desirable.

MR. COGHILL: But at whose instance?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, Order! The Question on the Paper has been answered.

Deaths from Lead Poisoning.

MR. COGHILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the total number of deaths in 1903 from lead poisoning in the china and earthenware trade and in the trade of house painters and plumbers; and whether he proposes to institute any legislation this session with regard to the trade of house painters and plumbers.

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The number of deaths from lead poisoning in the pottery trade in 1903 was three. The trade of house painters and plumbers does not come within the Factory Act and returns of deaths are not required to be made to the Home Office. It appears, however, from information supplied by the Registrars of Deaths, that there were in the same year in the whole of the United Kingdom thirty-nine cases in which the death of persons stated to be employed in this trade was attributed directly or indirectly to lead poisoning. I do not propose to introduce legislation this session with regard to this trade.

MR. COGHILL was understood to ask why the right hon. Gentleman took no steps with regard to a trade well known to be more dangerous than other trades to which he was paying attention?

*MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said that when a trade regulated by statute was known to be dangerous it was the special duty of the Home Office to keey it closelp under observation.

MR. COGHILL proceeded to put another Question.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Question on the Paper has been answered.

Scottish Deer Forests.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state how many acres have been added to the deer forest area in each of the crofting counties since the last Deer Forest Return was published.

*THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I am not in a position to give the hon. Member the information he desires.

Farranakilla National Schools.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the cause of the delay in building the Farranakilla National Schools, county Kerry, seeing that all necessary preliminaries were completed before March, 1902; whether he is aware that owing to the condition of the school the average attendance has fallen from 102 in January, 1901, to eighty-eight in

January, 1903, that parents have threatened to withdraw their children altogether owing to the condition of the school, and that it is at present roofed with corrugated iron, and is neither rain proof nor wind proof; and whether, in view of the urgency of this case, immediate steps will be taken to have the new school built.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The applicant for a grant to build the proposed schoolhouse has elected to wait until the new building plans have been sanctioned. The Commissioners are not aware that parents have threatened to withdraw their children from the school. It is a fact, however, that the attendance has fallen off, as stated. The Irish Government is in correspondence with the Treasury on the general question of the issue of building grants, and I hope to be in a position very shortly to make an announcement on the subject.

Sanitation of Kilkee.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether those who held the sworn inquiry into the sanitary condition of Kilkee, which was held last June, have issued a report, and whether another sworn inquiry on the same subject has been ordered; and, if so, what is the reason for the second inquiry, and at whose expense it will be held.

MR. WYNDHAM: The local shorthand writer, employed to take notes of the evidence given at the inquiry, failed to furnish a transcript to the inspectors. They were unable consequently to make a report. Another inquiry has been ordered. The question of the incidence of the cost cannot be decided pending a decision on the report and evidence.

Irish Asylum Loans.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the high rate of interest charged on loans required in connection with asylums in Ireland; and if a reduction in the rate of interest is contemplated.

MR. WYNDHAM: No alteration is at present contemplated in the conditions on which these loans are made.

Police Protection at Carrigeen.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Peter Morrissey, of Carrigeen, near Craughwell, is presumably under police protection; that a special police hut, containing four policemen, was set up some years ago, and is still maintained, for his sole protection; that Morrissey for several years back has remonstrated against this protection; and, if so, will he say whether any part of the cost of the police will be charged to the people of the district; and when may Peter Morrissey expect a release from this protection.

MR. WYNDHAM: This man was afforded special protection because such was considered necessary in the opinion of the local responsible authorities. It was discontinued last week under circumstances which satisfied the authorities that the step could safely be taken. No portion of the cost incurred is chargeable to the district.

Kinvara Harbour.

MR. DUFFY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been directed to the interview which recently took place between the county council of Galway and a number of gentlemen representing the Harbour of Kinvara; and whether, in view of the injury to trading which has taken place in the district owing to the condition of the quay, he will at once take steps to remedy the present state of affairs.

MR. WYNDHAM: It was not until the 6th instant that the county council passed a resolution undertaking to make a contribution towards the cost of repairing Kinvara Pier. The matter is now receiving attention.

Fair Rents in County Cork.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact of farmers in the Millstreet rural district served originating notices to have fair rents fixed during the past two years, and that they have received no intimation as to when their application will be heard, he can state when the consideration of these cases will be undertaken by the Land Commission.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The hearing of cases from this district will commence at Millstreet on the 26th instant.

Gaya Bay.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, having regard to the fact that coal is available in British North Borneo, will he say whether the Defence Committee have yet considered the expediency of acquiring some portion of the Chartered Company's territory, with a view to the establishment of a Naval station at Gaya Bay.

*Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (for Mr. A. J. Balfour) said the proceedings of the Defence Committee were necessarily of a confidential character and he could not therefore answer the Question.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee.

1. "That in the case of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements), Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 6, 8, 8A, 8B, and 8C be struck out of the Bill; That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

2. "That, in the case of the Rotherham Corporation, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 5 and 6 be struck out of the Bill, and that the powers to construct Tramway No. 4 be struck out of the Bill, unless the consent of the local and road authority be proved before the Select Committee on the Bill; That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

3. "That, in the case of the Ryde Gas Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with; That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolutions agreed to.

SELECTION (PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899, (COMMISSIONERS).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection; That, in pursuance of the provisions of the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had selected the following fourteen Members to form the Parliamentary Panel of Members of this House to act as Commissioners:—Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. A. K. Loyd, Mr. McCrae, Mr. William Maxwell, Mr. Pym, Mr. Parker Smith, Sir Walter Thorburn, Sir John Tuke, Mr. Levy, Mr. James Reid, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. John Wilson (Falkirk), and Mr. Wylie.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

HOME INDUSTRIES BILL.

"For the better regulation of Home Industries," presented by Colonel Denny; supported by Mr. Charles Douglas, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. John Burns, Mr. J. W. Wilson, and Mr. Emmott; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 5th April, and to be printed. [Bill 64.]

SMALL HOLDINGS BILL.

"To amend the Small Holdings Act, 1892," presented by Mr. Jesse Collings; supported by Colonel Long, Mr. Goulding, Sir Frederick Carne Rasch, Mr. Carlile, and Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 65.]

PURCHASE OF LAND (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

"To provide facilities for the sale of land to occupying tenants and others in England and Wales," presented by Mr. Jesse Collings; supported by Sir John Dorington, Mr. Spear, Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Herbert Roberts, Sir Lewis Molesworth, Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, Mr.

William Mitchell, and Lieutenant-Colonel Pryce-Jones; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 66.]

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

"For promoting agricultural education and nature study in Public Elementary Schools," presented by Mr. Jesse Collings; supported by Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Rothschild, Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore, Sir Ernest Flower, Mr. Spear, Mr. Morrell, Colonel Webb, and Sir Fortescue Flannery; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 2nd March, and to be printed. [Bill 67.]

LIQUOUR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (WALES) BILL.

"To enable owners and occupiers in Wales and Monmouthshire to have effectual control over the Liquor Traffic," presented by Mr. Herbert Roberts; supported by Sir Alfred Thomas, Mr. William Jones, and Mr. Herbert Lewis; to be read a second time upon Friday, 4th March, and to be printed. [Bill 68.]

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

[ELEVENTH DAY.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth:—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Question again proposed.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) said it was from no choice of hon. Members on his side of the House that that discussion on the Chinese labour question was taking place on an Amendment to the Address. They would have infinitely preferred an opportunity when Party ties were not so strong, and when the Party whip did not crack so loud. Right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench had again and again pressed for some other opportunity for that debate, but just as the Government had refused to permit a free vote in the Transvaal, so they had refused to permit a free vote in the House of Commons. The fault was not theirs that they were obliged to proceed in that manner. He would also like to be allowed to say that in making that Motion they were animated by no prejudice against the gold mines, as such. They had no desire to hamper their prosperity and he for one could fully endorse the remark of Lord Milner that they should be willing to adopt any measures—any reasonable measures—for the assistance of the gold mines, which were not in themselves intolerable. But they held that this measure which was proposed was in itself intolerable, and not only intolerable but also unnecessary. These were the two propositions he should set out to prove. He had no wish to use hard words concerning the Chinese nation as a whole. Anyone who had made a study of Chinese characteristics was aware that the educated classes of that nation—the wealthier classes—had many amiable and admirable qualities. They were possessed of great courtesy, of fortitude, of patience. Their integrity in commerce, their respect for literature were well known. But the class of Chinamen who were accustomed to emigrate were in the main a degraded people. They were vicious, immoral, and unclean. Their only amusements were gambling and opium smoking. Wherever they went they carried with them those qualities, and wherever they settled in white communities they were hated. That was the universal experience—an experience not merely in one case but in all, in Australia, in New Zealand, in he United States, in Canada — everywhere the presence of Chinamen had been found by white men to be intolerable. This was not a small question—a question of the importation of a small number of Chinese. They heard it said that the demand was merely for 10,000 Chinese labourers, but there was no such limit in the Ordinance, and when the Colonial Secretary was asked in that House if he would impose such a limitation of numbers he definitely declined to do so. It was true that in the Ordinance the employment of Chinese was limited to the one district of the Rand, but it was very doubtful if it could be permanently limited in that manner. Lord Milner only last June said that he wished to employ Asiatics on public works. An Ordinance had been passed in Rhodesia for the importation of the Chinese and only awaited the Royal assent, and if mines in other districts were opened they would have a demand for Chinese to be employed which it would be difficult to resist. But even if that proposal were limited to the Rand mines it would be seen that it was not merely a question of the importation of 5,000 or 10,000 Chinese. A Royal Commission in the Transvaal had considered this matter, and the Majority Report pointed out that the present deficiency of labour in the mines amounted to 129,000 men. In five years time an additional 196,000 men would be required—making in all 300,000 labourers needed in five years. That statement had been endorsed by the Chamber of Mines and in a speech by Sir George Farrar, who was the leader of the pro-Chinese party in the Transvaal. They could not keep 300,000 men in a ring fence. No matter what their restrictions might be, they could not keep such a multitude of men in close permanent confinement. They must mix with the neighbouring white population, and with the native black population. He did not wish to dwell on a distasteful subject, but he asked the House to imagine what would be the effect of that vast body of men living together, and belonging to a race admittedly immoral. He had asked the Secretary for the Colonies if he would secure an alteration in the regulations to the effect that any Chinaman who wished to do so should have the right to bring his wife and family with him on the same terms as he came himself. But the right hon. Gentleman declined to give any such pledge. Although he said he would endeavour to secure reasonable facilities for the introduction of women he distinctly declined to pledge himself that any labourer who wished to take his family with him should have a right to do so. The right hon. Gentleman shook his head, but if he would refer to his answer and the Question he would see that he used the words: "I cannot give the pledge which the hon. Member asks." That being so, they would inevitably have moral evils arising, and he ventured to assert deliberately that if the Ordinance was passed in its present form they would be inoculating Africa with the worst vices of Asia.

Now let them look at the terms of the Ordinance, and from the standpoint of the labourers themselves. He was sure that hon. Members opposite, who were inclined to support the measure, could not have realised the provisions of the Ordinance. In the first place, the labourer was not to be allowed to be employed in any occupation other than that of unskilled labour in the mines, therefore he had no opportunity of improving his position. But that was the smallest of the restrictions. He could be transferred and assigned from one master to another, but there was nothing in the Ordinance to secure that his consent should be given to the transfer. When the Ordinance was first introduced there was a clause in it that the labourer's consent should be required before he could be transferred from one master to another, but when the Ordinance was being passed through the Legislative Council that clause was struck out. Thus the masters might transfer a man from one to another as though he was a chattel, but on the other hand the labourer could not change his master if he wished to do so. When once he had signed his contract he could not terminate it so long as it lasted. He could not give notice to one employer and go to another. If he struck work he could be arrested and imprisoned. He was bound to reside on the premises of his employer in charge of a manager appointed for the purpose; he could never leave the premises without permission, which might or might not be granted, and, in any case, he could never leave for more than forty-eight hours at a time. If he escaped, he might be tracked down, arrested without warrant and imprisoned by a magistrate, while anyone who harboured or concealed an escaped labourer might be arrested and fined £50, or imprisoned in default of payment. Apparently the Transvaal Government had gone to the Statute-books of the slave States of America for a model for their Ordinance. The labourer might not be permitted by the importer to take his wife and family with him, and should they desire to join him afterwards and go to South Africa for the purpose, they might reach the shores of Natal, but they would not be allowed to land. They would be sent back. He asked the House, and he especially appealed to hon. Members opposite with whom the responsibility for this decision would largely rest, whether this Ordinance was not an enormity to be placed on the Statute-book of a British Colony. They would be told that the labourers would sign the contracts of their own free will, that the conditions would be fully explained to them, and that they need not go unless they chose. But these labourers were not a highly intelligent people, and he very much doubted if they could be made to understand the real meaning of the Ordinance. Even if they did, however, that was no justification for establishing such a condition of affairs. There was an edict of the Emperor Diocletian to the effect that no Roman citizen should be allowed to sell himself into slavery. That was a wise edict, it was not an infringement but a safeguard of liberty. But in this case they were not prohibiting—they were inviting the Chinese to sell themselves into slavery. It might be said that that there was freedom of contract—but there were cases in which freedom of contract might really be a contraction of freedom. If the Ordinance passed into law how should we be able to hold up our heads in the face of foreign criticism. The Frenchman and the German would say: "You English set yourselves up as teachers of humanity to the world at large. You condemn the harsh Government of Russia, you pass resolutions against the cruelties of Turkey, you circularise the Powers about the administration of the Congo Free State, but look at your own newest colonies; see how you keep your unskilled labourers there—like beasts in a stable—prisoners in gaol, like what Mill once called a 'human cattle farm.'" He did not think that would redound to the greatness or glory of the British Empire, that it would add to its prestige, or raise the honour of its name. Then, again, they were told that they must have these severe restrictions or the Chinese would overrun the country, would enter into all occupations, and would undersell the whites. It was true. They were in this dilemma, either the Chinese must be serfs or a danger. He did not know which alternative was the worse. But there was a third alternative, that which he would ask the House to adopt, and that was to have nothing to do with the scheme at all.

These were the moral and ethical objections to the proposal; and they must always have the first place in any question of policy. But there were also political objections to be considered. When the war was over it was recognised that the greatest danger to the future of South Africa was the fact that the Boers constituted a majority of the population in the Transvaal, and that they were a race which increased more rapidly in numbers than the British. To obviate this difficulty and danger the Yeomanry were invited to settle on the land; emigration was to be encouraged; an association was formed to send out English women to South Africa to get employment, and ultimately to be married there. Every effort was in fact to be made to increase the British population in order to act as a political counterbalancing force to the large number of Boers. What, however, were they doing now that they had a natural economic attraction for the British population? They were slamming the door in the face of their British population. That meant an indefinite postponement of the self-government in the Transvaal to which as a nation we stood pledged. Besides, if this measure were introduced without the formal consent of the people of the Transvaal, the mine-owners would be more than ever afraid of the establishment of self-government. Their fortunes would be resting on a basis of Chinese labour. Self-government might destroy that foundation. It might lead to a reaction, and the people might insist, as they had insisted in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States, that this immigration of Chinese should cease. Consequently the whole influence of the mine-owners would be thrown into the scale against the introduction of self-government. They knew to their cost how great that influence was. There was a further political objection. The Federation of South Africa had long been an ideal they had wished to attain.

The history of the movement had been long and chequered. There had been many attempts to secure this object, which was not only desirable in itself, but which was a necessary step in the Federation of the Empire as a whole. If they had not self-government in the Transvaal they could not have the Federation of South Africa. And even if they secured self-government in the Transvaal they would still be faced by a great obstacle in the way of federation. Immigration was naturally a federal matter. In Germany, in Canada, in the United States, and in the Australian Commonwealth it had been treated federally. But he did not believe the Cape would tolerate Chinese labour. He would ask the House to listen to the strong and emphatic declaration of Cape Ministers on this subject. In a telegram to the Colonial Secretary they said—

> "In relation to the policy of British South African Federation, which Ministers are most earnestly pursuing, they cannot but feel that the importation of Asiatics will greatly hamper its consummation, as it will introduce a highly discordant element between the European communities which will certainly complicate, if not altogether prevent, the union of all the Colonies under a central Administration."

That was a grave declaration which the House should not fail to note. Morally, socially, and politically they held that this measure was intolerable. Economically it was unnecessary as well. It seemed to be assumed among the commercial classes in this country that in the Transvaal at the present time everything was stagnant and at a standstill, that the mines were hardly working, and that the country was in the throes of a most severe economic crisis. That view was based on despatches from Lord Milner in December and January last, in which he said—

> "The immediate prospect is very bad. There is a complete stagnation in commerce and enterprise owing to the labour difficulty."

Lord Milner also spoke of "a crisis," of "grave distress," of "an inevitable exodus of the white population." But let the House contrast that with what Lord Milner said in the preceding June. At that time a deputation waited on him, and in the course of his reply, he said—

> "It is an unfortunate circumstance that so many people seem unable to discuss this question of fact in a temperate manner, that they become partisans, so to speak, of a particular solution, and, while exaggerating everything that makes in favour of that solution, decline to see the plainest arguments on the other side. To listen to some of the extreme advocates of Asiatic labour you would think that this place was on the verge of total ruin. What is really the case? The production of gold even now is greater than in 1895 or 1896, when the Transvaal already was, and had been for some time, the marvel of the world in the matter of gold production. The world progresses, no doubt, but what was fabulous wealth seven years ago is not abject poverty to-day."

What had happened in the six months that had elapsed since those words were spoken? Had the gold production diminished? Had the number of labourers decreased? Let them compare the returns of December and June. The gold production had increased from 237,000 ozs. in June to 286,000 ozs. in December, an increase of 20 per cent. The number of labourers in the same period had increased from 59,400 to 68,800, an increase of 16 per cent. The production to-day was not what it was in 1895 or 1896 when Lord Milner said the wealth was fabulous, or in 1897 when it had largely increased, but it was on the same scale as in the first half of 1898, and there was only one year in all its history—the year from the middle of 1898 down to the beginning of the war, when there was a larger production of gold in the Transvaal than at the present moment. Lord Milner had long been more or less of a partisan of Asiatic labour. Last June, however, he had to suppress to some extent the movement for introducing Asiatic labour into the Transvaal. Now he was encouraging it. What was the reason for his change of policy? It was not because there had been no increase in the production of gold or in the number of labourers, but because last June he had to deal with a Colonial Minister who was personally opposed to the introduction of Chinese labour; and now there was a Secretary of State in office more amenable to pressure and advice. It was true that the number of labourers in the Transvaal was now considerably smaller than it was before the war, but then a smaller number was needed in view of the improved means of production. Owing to the enforcement of the liquor laws, better organisation, and a larger use of machinery, the production per labourer per month now was four ounces of gold.

In 1899 it was 3·4 ounces—an increase of one-seventh. That was an important item, because it showed that in all these figures they had to consider the fact that the production of six labourers now was equal to seven labourers then. He did not deny that there was some depression in the Transvaal at present. After the war there was great inflation. There was much money spent on the building of houses, in re-opening the mines, and repairing the disasters of the war; much Imperial money was spent and circulated in the country, but that had now been stopped. There had also been a drought in South Africa. All these things tended to cause a natural depression. He did not deny, also, that there was a shortage of labour for the Transvaal mines, and that more labourers could be employed if they were forthcoming, that more enterprises could be undertaken if there were more labourers, and that new industries could be started. But there was no crisis, nothing that called for extreme measures.

He did not propose to enter into the question whether or not it was possible to secure more native labourers. His hon. friends who were to follow him would go into that important controversy on the possibility of getting more Kaffirs—the influence of the reduction of wages, of the accumulation of money by the natives during the war, the methods of recruitment, the terribly high rate of mortality on the Rand. The statement was not yet proved that no more labour was obtainable from the Kaffirs of South Africa. But if they liked he would assume the truth of that statement. He would assume that the reports of the Bloemfontein Conference and of the majority of the Royal Commission were correct. He would assume that the native labour supply in South Africa had been absolutely exhausted, and that not one more Kaffir could be obtained from any source. Still he asserted that there was no necessity for this measure. He might be asked—Do you take a merely negative attitude, and say that there is to be no further increase in the labour supply? He could conceive of hon. Members taking that attitude, and saying "Rather than accept these Chinese slaves we would prefer that the gold should remain in the ground." That was not the argument he would address to the House. His argument was that if there were no more Kaffirs the mines could still be worked at a profit, not by Chinese labour, but by a larger employment of white labour. He would try to prove that proposition to the House. He knew many hon. Members opposite held the view that it was impossible to employ white labour at unskilled work in South Africa, because white men would not work side by side with Kaffirs at the same employment. It was true that white men would not work side by side with Kaffirs; whites and blacks would no more mix than oil and water. But white men could be employed in one part of a mine and black men in another part at the same class of work. This was not merely conjecture or prophecy. It was experience. It was not a question whether white men would do unskilled work in South Africa, but whether they had done it. Mr. Creswell, the manager of a mine, who had made the experiment, said—

> "Since the war I have had a large number of men working for me, and have had practically the whole of my surface works run by white men to enable me to put almost the whole complement of my natives underground. Underground I have also had white men, replacing natives as machine-drill helpers, shovelling and tramming, and helping the timber-men. In all these departments the men have on the whole worked well."

The evidence would be found in the Blue-book of the General Manager of the Rand Mines, Limited, who had had over 400 unskilled white labourers working in his mine for many months. Then there was the report of the Government Mining Engineer (page 193) who said—

> "In the majority of the crushing mills the native has been entirely replaced by the European."

There they had the fact recorded on the authority of the Government engineer that in one important department Kaffir work had been replaced by unskilled white labour in most of the mines on the Rand. They had also the fact that the Government had had a large number of English navvies and 200 Boers employed on earthworks on railways in South Africa. They could not get over facts. He hoped they would hear no more of the exploded superstition that white men would not do what was called Kaffir work. Hundreds of them had been doing work which was supposed to be derogatory to white men, and which should be limited only to the blacks. Then they were told that white labour was obviously too costly. They were asked "Can you afford to work a mine if you pay a white man 10s. a day for work which the Kaffir does for 2s. 6d.? How can a mine be made to pay with white labour on such terms?" Of course if they merely replaced a Kaffir by a white man, doing the same work, obviously the cost of production went up fourfold. Many figures could be quoted, and doubtless would be quoted, showing that the cost of production was largely increased when white men were employed, but almost all these figures were based on the employment of irregular soldiers who were engaged on what were really relief works. After the war, a large number of irregular soldiers were left in the Transvaal without employment, and, in response to an appeal from Lord Kitchener, the mine managers provided work for many of these men. But just as in this country we did not expect to get economical work from men who were engaged on relief works for the unemployed, so in South Africa the cost of the work done by the irregular soldiers who were not accustomed to that class of work, was extremely high. They would be told, also, that the British navvies were taken out to do work on the railways and that these men were found to be so costly that they had to be sent home. It would be seen from the reports of the engineers at page 110 of the Blue-book that—

> "These men are not navvies at all, and are determined to loaf through their year's agreement. . . . Among these so-called navvies there are a number of men who appear to have come out with the intention of doing no work."

Under the circumstances these gangs of navvies were bound to prove unsatisfactory. In any case the making of earthworks on railways was work requiring sheer brute force. If white men were employed in the mines they could use mechanical devices which could not be used if black men were employed. The general manager of the Rand Mines, referring to the Boers, reported that they—

> "Have generally performed their work very satisfactorily, and although receiving much larger pay than the average native, in certain cases, as shown in the contracting for shovelling and tramming underground, they have proved nearly as economical as regards cost per ton as native labour."

Mr. Creswell, who made his experiment under many adverse circumstances, reported that labour in the cyanide works of his mine was 5·3d. per ton when Kaffirs were employed, and 4·9d. when whites were employed. Labour in the mill cost 4·8d. with the Kaffirs and 4·2d. with the whites. In developing and stoping, which was the actual work of mining underground, the cost per ton mined of machine drill contract work was 6s. 4d. with Kaffirs and 6s. 9d. with white men, an infinitesimal difference which the industry could well afford to bear. If white men were employed with Kaffir methods the expense would be heavy, but if white men were employed with white methods then they could arrive at economy. In the Transvaal, as in all cases where there had been a large and plentiful supply of cheap labour, few attempts had been made to economise labour. There was absolutely no attempt at mechanical haulage underground in any mine except that, and the much-abused Mr. Creswell had introduced a system of electrical haulage in the Village Main Reef mine.

At the Annual Meeting of the Rand Mines on 25th March, 1903, the Chairman, Sir J. Percy Fitzpatrick, who was a leader of the Chinese party, quoted and endorsed a statement of Mr. Eckstein, which had previously been made, to the following effect—

> "It is not yet entirely satisfactory, I admit, and we all acknowledge the cost, and in some respect, the unatisfactoriness of the machine-drill, but the experience is a comparatively recent one; we are improving all the time, and I think we may reasonably look forward to the introduction of a small stope-drill which will aid us immensely in solving our labour difficulty.

and he went on to say—

> "That by the development of the machine-drill we can cut down our native labour to a very large extent—50,000 or 60,000 natives"

who would be replaced by a very much smaller number of skilled white miners. That was not the statement of a mere partisan of white labour. Why should these goldfields in South Africa be the only goldfields in the world which it was impossible to work with white labour; which could only be worked by

Mr. Herbert Samuel.

employing some subordinate race? There were goldfields in America and Australia. Were there natural difficulties in the way of winning the gold on the Rand which did not exist in America or Australia? If hon. Members would turn to the Minority Report of the Labour Commission they would see quoted a statement of Mr. W. H. Hall, who was for ten years State Engineer of California and Supervising Engineer to the United States Geological Survey, and was now in the employ of the Consolidated Goldfields of South Africa, and H. Eckstein & Co., and a distinguished American expert, who said—

> "Judging from long experience, the natural conditions and circumstances under which this mining is prosecuted may well be compared with those surrounding and affecting the cost of working auriferous lodes, veins, or ledges in the Rocky Mountains and Pacific Slope States of America. The methods of mining and reducing the banket ores here are practically the same as those followed in American quartz mining. Having made such comparisons, from my own personal knowledge I have no hesitation in saying that the conditions—so far as nature has made them—under which the industry which is here developing, viewing the Witwatersrand fields as a whole, are decidedly more favourable than those present, and affecting the cost of similar mining, as a general thing, in America."

and then he went on to say—

> "If gold is not obtained here at less cost, the reason is to be found in the shortcomings of man, not the obduracy or unkindness of Nature."

If Australia was pointed to, he would quote from the last number of the *Mining Journal* of London—a paper of long-established reputation. That paper said—

> "Strong evidence is to be found in the work of white labour in other camps, and especially of late in West Australia amid natural difficulties unknown on the Rand. On these fields highly skilled labour has been evolved from raw material and costs reduced to something like 16 per cent. below those current on the Rand for similar class of ores, which suggests that economic considerations do not prevent the magnates from accepting this solution, since it is idle to pretend that the cost of living could not be made cheaper on the Rand than in Western Australia, In South Africa no attempt has been made by those who reject white labour to reorganise their system so as to utilise its superior intelligence."

Again he asked under those circumstances and conditions in South Africa, which were much more favourable naturally than in America or Australia, why it was that in South Africa, and in South Africa alone, it was impossible to work gold mines except with coloured labour? The secret of the matter was that white labour was not desired. It was not that white labour was impossible. White labour was not wanted. For that there were two reasons. One was that it required a great reorganisation of the industry, something like an industrial revolution, and men were naturally unwilling to spend time, effort, and trouble in making such a great change if they had some other solution applicable. Everyone was inclined to take the line of least resistance. But there was a second reason, far more cogent from their point of view, and infinitely more powerful. Even financiers had their moments of candour, and in some of these moments they had from the leaders of the mining industry on the Rand some very significant statements. There was the statement of Mr. Rudd, one of the Directors of the Consolidated Goldfields' Company. That leader of the industry said—

> "If we could replace the 200,000 native workers by 100,000 unskilled whites, they would simply hold the government of the country in the hollow of their hand, and, without any disparagement to the British labourer, I prefer to see the more intellectual section of the community at the helm."

A report on the whole mining industry of the Rand was prepared for the ex-Colonial Secretary the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, by the Johannesburg Chamber of Mines. A summary of that report was published in *The Times*, and appeared in that journal on 9th February last year. A paragraph in that summary contained the words that, as long as the present policy was continued on the Rand "they could avoid that trail of the serpent,—the formation of labour unions." Now, a very significant thing had happened in connection with that paragraph. That report had been printed verbatim in the Blue-book, but the paragraph he had read was missing! [AN HON. MEMBER on the OPPOSITION Benches: The trail of the serpent rubbed it out.] Now, either *The Times* correspondent must have invented that sentence out of his own head and put into it the summary he had forwarded to *The Times*, or else the Chamber of Mines must have found out that they had been too candid, and had published a revised version of their report and sent it to the Colonial Office. But they had further corroboration in the evidence of Mr. Hennen Jennings, who had played an important part in this question. That gentleman was one of the most distinguished American consulting mining engineers on the Rand. And it should be remembered that most of the leading consulting engineers were not Englishmen looking at this problem from the standpoint of patriots, but Americans who looked at it through the eyes of foreigners. A witness before the Labour Commission, Mr. Wybergh, was asked the question—"Can you tell the Commission what his (Mr. Jennings') opinions were, or are, on the matter?" And he answered—

"I think it would probably be better to get them from himself, but as he made no secret of his opinions, I may say that what he told me was that he did not want white labour, and that he did not believe in it—at least it came to this really, that he did not want it—he objected to it."

And there was the now famous letter of Mr. Tarbutt, a Director of the Goldfields' Company and the Chairman of the Village Main Reef Company, who wrote on 3rd July, 1902, to Mr. Creswell—

> "With reference to your trial of white labour for surface work on the mines, I was not present at the board meeting, when a letter was written stating that the board did not approve of the suggestion, and on receipt of the last mail I called another board to reconsider the matter, in view of the fact that the local board had already commenced to adopt your suggestion. I have consulted the Consolidated Goldfields' people, and one of the members of the board of the Village Main Reef has consulted Messrs. Wernher, Beit, & Co., and the feeling seems to be one of fear that if a large number of white men are employed on the Rand in the position of labourers, the same troubles will arise as are now prevalent in the Australian Colonies, *i.e.*, that the combination of the labouring classes will become so strong as to be able to more or less dictate, not only on the question of wages, but also on political questions by the power of the votes when a representative Government is established."

MR. CUST (Southwark, Bermondsey): Has the hon. Gentleman seen the answer of Mr. Jennings'?

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: No, I have not seen it, but the hon. Member can give it when he speaks in the course of the debate. It must be remembered what strong motives these men had for not being candid; how everything must induce them to keep quiet their opinions; and yet they had these four declarations clear and distinct, to the effect that even if white labour were economically possible, they did not want it, because the white labourers would be members of trades unions and have votes. Indeed, everybody who was acquainted with the opinions of these circles was aware that what was continually being said was that they did not want the Transvaal to become another Australia; they wanted to keep the power in their own hands. It was not so much coloured labour, or cheap labour, that they desired. They needed above all labour which would be voteless and subservient. That was the secret of the whole matter. But it would be said that Lord Milner supported these men. Lord Milner also said he did not want white labour, even if it were possible. His reason for this attitude was different. It had been distinctly declared. He did not want unskilled white labour. His words were "We do not want a white proletariate in this country." His deliberate policy was that he wished the Transvaal and South Africa to remain permanently a country in which an aristocracy of whites was supported by, was dependent upon, the labour of a servile class of coloured men. Now, he submitted to the House, he submitted to the Colonial Secretary, who was a student of political science, and who was accustomed to take large views, that was a profoundly false ideal for the future of South Africa. It was always a temptation to depend upon the labour of alien serfs. Perhaps it was in the tropics unavoidable. He had no doubt that they should be told that there was the precedent of the West Indies and Natal. But that was no precedent. The West Indies were a tropical country and Natal was a sub-tropical country, whereas the Transvaal was a temperate country. Moreover, the conditions of the indentured labour were wholly different. In the Transvaal, which had a temperate climate, it would be far better if there never had been any servile black races in the country. Who could doubt that South Africa would have been a cleaner and a happier country if the Kaffirs had never been there. But the Kaffirs were there; and they must naturally take their place in the economic system; and he was not, of course, going on the assumption that the blacks could be removed. But the helot system was always an evil system, and they wished as far as they could to work away from it, and to make the Transvaal as far as possible a homogeneous white country. Lord Milner, on the other hand, finding that one race of subordinate labour had apparently proved insufficient in numbers now desired to reinforce that by another race of subordinate labour. The black being not enough, he now wished to introduce the yellow. They had no sympathy with this administrator in a hurry, who wanted to run up a jerry-built colony. They would rather see the Transvaal built up slowly as a white man's country than built up rapidly as a yellow man's country. They were at the parting of the ways. The whole future of South Africa was at stake to-day, and it was that consideration which gave this question its momentous importance. They were told that the Transvaal Labour Commission had reported that the native supply of labour was insufficient, and that white labour was impossible. They should, however, remember that the Commission was not like an English Royal Commission. It was merely the Chamber of Mines writ large. Twelve members reported; two of them were in favour of white labour; and of the remaining ten, seven had made public declarations in favour of Chinese labour before their appointment. The evidence in support of that statement would be found on page 350 of the Blue-book. Two other members were said to have acted similarly; but he had no evidence as to that. The Commission accepted without question all the evidence presented by the Chamber of Mines and rejected all the contrary evidence. Indeed it was common talk in Johannesburg immediately after the formation of the Commission, and before it had begun to take evidence that the Report would be ten against white labour, and two in favour of it; and in the circumstances he thought they might dismiss very lightly the Report of this Commission. But they could not dismiss very lightly the action of the Transvaal Government in appointing a Commission of that kind. The Transvaal Government had a *parti pris* in this matter. It had abandoned the seat of judge. It had come down to the bar and taken on itself the functions of counsel for the plaintiff. There had long been two Governments in the Transvaal. There was the official ostensible Government of the Crown, represented by the High Commissioner, the Lieutenant-Governor, and the Legislative Council. But there was also another Government—unofficial, intangible—a Government appointed by no warrant, and embodied in no individuals, the Government of the mine-owners. The late Colonial Secretary recognised that; for when he was in South Africa and complaint was made that the Government of the Transvaal was a Crown Colony Government, he said at a banquet—"Surely you would rather be governed by Downing Street than by Park Lane." Whereupon his audience burst into loud applause. But Downing Street had now abdicated and Park Lane was supreme, and that was why this House should don the ermine of the judge and take into its own hands the decision. There appeared to be a kind of "Alice-in-Wonderland" theory that the more white labour that was excluded the more white labour would be employed. It might be true, as the majority of the Commission had reported, that if they had Chinese labour in South Africa they would have 5,000 more white artisans employed. But if there was no Chinese labour in the Transvaal they would employ, not 5,000, but 50,000 white labourers. And from the point of view of the future of the Transvaal, they must depend not so much on the gold mines as on agriculture. Fifty thousand white labourers would form an important market for agricultural produce. The Chinese would consume rice and salt fish, which would not give any encouragement to the agricultural industry. It was true that they were to be supplied with gods from Birmingham, and with coffins in which their bones were to be transported to their fatherland, but those things were not likely to encourage the economic development of the Transvaal. This was as clear an issue as had ever arisen between capital and labour—between money and men. The ex-Colonial Secretary, speaking at Leeds on alien immigration into this country, said—

> "We are not going to allow the foreign workman, unless he be of a very desirable description, to take the bread out of the mouth of the British working man."

Were they going to adopt that rule in the Transvaal? Did the right hon. Gentleman pretend that a Chinaman was of such a very desirable description, or did he maintain that the employment of Chinese unskilled labour would not exclude the British workman? Evidence after evidence, authority after authority, showed they could employ unskilled white labour if only they adopted the proper machinery and appliances, and the reason why it was excluded was because it was not wanted. And this was to be the outcome of the great war. He thought that it was Guizot who said of the French Republic of 1848 that it began with Plato and ended with the gendarme. The South African War began with great ideals. They were told that it was fought in the interests of freedom, that here we should have a great new colony to be the home of another British nation. And how does it all end? In 300,000 Chinese serfs. In this country there was a feeling of bitter disappointment—an undercurrent of deep resentment—in this matter, which, when it came to the surface, would sweep away many of those who now supported this proposal. Was the voice of the Colonies not to be heard in this matter? The Colonies helped to conquer the Transvaal, and they had expressed their views clearly and emphatically. The Cape was unanimously against Chinese labour, and there was a deep feeling against it in Australia and New Zealand. They were told during that war that England should consider the opinion of the Colonies. Now they were told that the Colonies had nothing to do with this matter.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I said directly the contrary.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL said that whatever the right hon. Gentleman's words might have been, what were his acts?

The advice of the Colonies was being ignored and disregarded. Why this difference between now and the time of the war? It was because the views of the Colonies were in agreement with the views of the Government then, and they were opposed to them now. This Amendment had been drawn with extreme moderation. It did not ask this House to veto the Ordinance. He thought they might have been justified in doing that. They had not even asked the House to refer the matter to the whole of South Africa. They merely asked that the assent of the people of the Transvaal themselves should be formally ascertained, either through a popularly elected Parliament which they should prefer, or, failing that, through a *referendum*. The right hon. Gentleman said he was prepared to treat the Transvaal as a self-governing colony. That was precisely what they asked. What course would be adopted by a self-governing colony on a question of this magnitude, in Australia, for instance, or in New Zealand? There would be either a general election or a *referendum*, and that was what they now asked. They were told that the delay would be too long, but it would only take a few weeks to frame a register on the basis of the franchise in Cape Colony, perhaps, and to take a vote. To decide this important question, which was pregnant with so much good or evil for the future, was it too much that they should ask for a delay of a few weeks? But they were told that the Government knew that the majority in the Transvaal were favourable to the proposal, and that therefore it was not necessary to take a *referendum*. But if the Government knew that the majority was in favour of Chinese labour, why do they fear a *referendum*? Why did the mine-owners oppose it? They, on the contrary, felt convinced that the majority in the Transvaal was not in favour of this proposal. They knew that the majority was against it a year ago. The ex-Colonial Secretary said in that House in March—

> "That the vast majority of the people of South Africa were opposed to Asiatic labour."

In January last Lord Milner said that—

> "A year ago Sir George Farrar's proposal would have found very few supporters in the country."

Now they were asked to believe that in the brief period which had elapsed such an extraordinary turnover had occurred in the Transvaal. That was an exceedingly difficult thing to prove.

The Government were relying on three things: the Legislative Council, public meetings, and the petition. The Legislative Council had declared in favour of Chinese labour. But it was not representative. Every one of its members had been nominated by Lord Milner. The late Colonial Secretary said that when a question was put to a Council so appointed they should weigh the votes as well as count them; and he added that if they found that the representatives of labour were opposed to any proposal he should regard it as an important factor. What was the position with regard to this Council? Of the twenty-six members who voted thirteen were official, and of the other thirteen four were directly or indirectly concerned with the financial houses. Of the other nine, four belonged to the class known locally as "tame Boers." The representative Boers had not consented to serve on the Council, and the Government secured these gentlemen who it was well-known were very open to influence and advice. He did not think the opinion of the four Boers was really representative of the Boer population because it was well-known that they were susceptible to advice. Of the thirteen non-official members four were directly connected with this matter, four were these Boers, and of the five that remained one voted for the Ordinance and the remainder voted against it. There was only one labour member in the Council, and the right hon. Gentleman the ex-Colonial Secretary had said he would attach the greatest importance to the opinion of labour members. This labour member voted against the Ordinance. There could be no doubt but that very great pressure had been brought to bear on the people of the Transvaal in this matter. He would mention only one case in illustration. Three men had stood out as the opponents of Chinese labour, each in the front rank of his several calling. Mr. Wybergh in the Government—the Commissioner of Mines; Mr. Monypenny in the press—the editor of the *Johannesburg Star*; Mr. Creswell at the mines—the General Manager of the Village Main Reef. What had happened to those three men? Mr. Wybergh was obliged to resign his appointment in the Government, Mr. Monypenny his editorship of the *Johannesburg Star*, and Mr. Creswell his position of mine manager. If that was what happened to those in high places what might have happened to those in obscure positions. With regard to public meetings, on only two occasions was the number of votes in favour of the importation of Chinese labour given in the reports of the fourteen meetings mentioned in the Blue-book. But in any case open voting by a show of hands was no test of the opinion of the people; had the voting been by secret ballot the result would have been very different. As to the petition, no authoritative examination had been made into the signatures, half of which, for all they knew, might have been duplicates or fictitious, Great pressure had been exerted and all opposition had been forced underground. But a great many resolutions had been passed against the importation of Chinese labour, and only yesterday we had presented the letter sent by the leaders of the Boer people. So long as the Constitution of the Transvaal was suspended it was this House, and not the nominated Council in Pretoria, that was the true guardian of the interests of the people of the Transvaal. This House could not divest itself of that function unless it deputed the matter to a free vote of the people of that country.

In conclusion, he thanked the House for its kind indulgence in having listened for so long, and so patiently to one who was young, not only in Membership of this House, but also in years. He had spoken, he hoped, without exaggeration. He had spoken, he was sure, without Party feeling. To sum up what he had said: They asserted that these thousands of Chinese, socially, could not fail to be a centre of demoralisation in the places in which they lived. They asserted that the conditions under which they would be employed were conditions almost of slavery. Politically, the proposal, by maintaining the Boers in a majority would lead to the postponement of self-government in the Transvaal, and it would hinder, if not prevent, the Federation of South Africa. Although there was a shortage of labour, there was no crisis in the Transvaal due to the low production of the mines, since the production of gold was as high now as it was in 1898, and in only one year had the yield ever been higher than it was now. Even if Kaffir labour could not be obtained, white labour could be economically employed in getting the gold. The reason why white labour was not employed was not because it could not be used economically but because it was not desired. He did not ask the House itself to settle this question, but to refer it to the judgment of the people of the Transvaal. That was their case, and he submitted it was an overwhelming case. This House had to arrive at a grave judgment; it had to look to the future, to build up the greatness, of a new British colony. It had to decide whether it would lightly permit a new community of serfs to be established under its flag. It had to decide whether the waste-places of the earth under its control should be peopled by Mongolians or should be the homes of the white peoples. Those were large issues. They touched the very roots of Imperial policy. He prayed that the House might be guided by wisdom in its decision.

*MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight), in rising to second the Amendment, asked the House to believe that he fully realised the gravity of the question to be discussed, and he asked the House to reflect what the consequences might be if it refused to sanction the Amendment. He also craved indulgence, because he himself had some special reason to take an interest in this matter. He took up the question and protested against the importation of Chinese indentured labour long before he dreamed that any hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House would make it their cause. Nor could he believe even now they had made this cause their own. He was certain the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary had not, and he believed before the debate terminated that the truth would prevail, and that the House would arrive at a judgment which would avoid the disaster which would follow hasty action in this matter. Many Members might have deeper knowledge of the methods of the mines and all connected with them than he, but no hon. Member could have a deeper political interest in the welfare of South Africa. The question presented itself to his mind as one upon which they should try to proceed as far as possible by way of agreement. The able speech of the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment had stated very accurately some reasons for believing that it was possible to use white labour in South Africa, but he would approach the matter from another point of view and see how far both sides could agree. Every single Member of the House was agreed that this proposal to import Chinese labour was in itself an evil.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): No.

*MAJOR SEELY: The hon. Member for Gravesend had said it was not an evil. Even he would agree that it was highly undesirable, so that every Member with one exception would agree that it was an evil and all would agree that it was highly undesirable. It might be difficult to appeal to any living man for an impartial opinion upon this question, he would therefore appeal to one who was dead, to the greatest thinking mind of this age, Herbert Spencer! Herbert Spencer was asked his opinion as to the importation of Chinese labour into America, and he said—

> "I am opposed to it, because if it occurs one of two things must happen, either the Chinese must mix with the nation, in which case you get a bad hybrid, and, if on the other hand they do not mix, they must occupy a position of slavery."

While the Chinese were as much justified in their repugnance to us as we in our repugnance to them, the fact remained, and this could not be disputed, that so great was the repugnance of all Anglo-Saxon peoples to the admixture of Chinese in the population that in no single case had Chinese been imported into any country without great efforts being subsequently made to get rid of the influx of Chinese. He was speaking of Anglo-Saxon people resident in Anglo-Saxon communities for white people, but the case was wholly different in the tropics, where a small white aristocracy dominated a necessarily subject race. It was a strange thing that the House should now be asked, after somewhat scant consideration, to import into a country, which we had lately acquired not too easily, the very thing that every Anglo-Saxon community was doing its utmost to eject and exclude. Moreover, it had always been opposed in the country to which the Amendment referred. The question of the shortage of labour had been the subject of various inquiries. The Cape Labour Commission of 1893 came to the conclusion that there was not a sufficiency of Kaffir labour, but their Report concluded with the words—

> "We are strongly opposed to the importation of Asiatic labour,"

adding that there was quite enough race complication already. In 1898 the Chamber of Mines, in their Annual Report on the Labour Supply, after stating that there was a shortage of labour, said that proposals had been made for an importation of Asiatic labour, but they did not recommend the adoption of that course. So that the Chamber of Mines at the time saw the grave dangers which underlay the importation of Asiatics. He did not desire to dwell on the social evils which must flow from Chinese labour. Herbert Spencer, in a letter which recently appeared in *The Times*, after stating his objections to Chinese labour, declared that if there was any large importation of Chinese labour immense social difficulty, and ultimately great social disorganisation, would arise.

The House should not be misled by suggestions for bringing wives and families with these Chinese. Without imputing evil motives to anyone, he unhesitatingly stated that those responsible for the importation of Chinese labour would demur to the suggestion that they contemplated bringing wives and children for 40 per cent. of the number of labourers they hoped to obtain. If the mine-owners induced this country ultimately to agree to the importation of 150,000 indentured labourers it was not at all likely that they would also take upon themselves the burden of supporting wives, with an average of three children apiece, for 40 per cent. of the number. That would mean that something like 250,000 women and children would be herded round about the Witwatersrand mines, and from what he had heard from gentlemen thoroughly conversant with the question, he thought the suggestion was *primâ facie* absurd. Chinamen had never taken their wives and families into distant lands in the past, even when there were no restrictions. During the years 1861–81 there were practically no restrictions on the entry of Chinamen into Australia and New Zealand; large numbers went there, and some 30,000 were still left, but he had never heard that they took their wives and families or that they were desirable citizens. He had read Blue-book after Blue-book on the subject, and all colonial statesmen of experience concurred in the view that the importation of Chinamen, whether indentured or otherwise, was disastrous to a country. That being so, was it likely that to this new country, where the cost of living was infinitely dearer than in other countries, the Chinamen would take their wives and families? Before believing that anything so inherently improbable was likely to take place, the House should be placed in possession of incontrovertible proof that arrangements had been made in writing by those who proposed the importation of these men for the bringing of the wives and children. But even if such arrangements were made, what about the remaining 60 per cent.? It was difficult to speak on the subject in the House of Commons, for he deprecated the raking up of terrible stories of the results of Chinese immigration. He did not believe that those stories were generally founded on facts, but he did hold that, whereas the Chinese might be a great nation, and no man would wish to say anything against a people who had so many great qualities, the class of persons who emigrated under the conditions foreshadowed in this Ordinance, were not a desirable class, and that they tended to be a criminal and a debasing people.

But admitting the evil, was it a necessary evil? The hon. Member for the Cleveland Division had made out an extraordinarily good case against immediately assuming that the alternative of white labour was impossible. He did not say that white labour was possible, but it had not yet been shown to be impossible. A view which prevailed with many hon. Members was that if more Chinamen were imported more white labour would be used. We wanted to arrive, as far as possible, at a white South Africa. It was agreed that the more white people there were the better it would be. It must also be agreed that if the importation of Chinamen was not permitted, the proportion of white men to coloured would be greater than if the importation was allowed. Before the war about 9,5000 natives and 9,500 whites were employed in the Witwatersrand mines, while in the last month for which figures were available, the numbers employed were 68,000 and 12,700 respectively. Therefore, when there was not so much shortage of labour, the proportion of whites to natives was one in ten, while at present the proportion was nearly one in five. Although it might be more profitable to have more black men in proportion to the white, actually they could not get them but more white were employed in proportion. Let them suppose if they imported these Chinamen they might employ more white men altogether, although he did not admit this. The point was that if the House refused to sanction this Ordinance, the proportion of white men would be greater than if they allowed this Ordinance to come into force. The hon. Member opposite read a startling passage from Lord Milner's reply to a deputation. After having read that in the Blue-book he could not conceive how His Majesty's Government could for one moment dream of sanctioning an Ordinance which was known to be contrary to the wishes of the overwhelming proportion of those who were citizens under the British flag in those colonies. Lord Milner admitted that the progress of South Africa after the war had been amazingly rapid, and they were now producing more gold than in 1895 and 1896. The hon. Member opposite had not, however, brought out the more startling fact that at the moment Lord Milner made that statement he was speaking only one year after the most devastating war which this country had experienced for a good many years. The rapid recuperation of the mining industry in South Africa, in the face of immense difficulties, had been marvellous, and those who managed the mines were deserving of the greatest credit for the way they had surmounted those difficulties. When he went to Johannesburg the line was blown up both in front and behind the train in which he travelled, and he wished to emphasise that it was less than two years since they sustained a crushing defeat not far from Johannesburg. Within less than two years the mines were actually producing between 80 and 90 per cent. of the greatest production they ever produced before. This proposal to introduce Chinese labour was like arguing that the man who stole a loaf of bread because he was hungry could no longer be sent to gaol because he pleaded urgent necessity to eat. In this case the man said, "I have had some but I am still hungry and want more." Take another example. Suppose a man found that he did not walk quite as fast as he used to before an accident and he contended that he was entitled to steal his neighbour's horse and cart in consequence. The argument was precisely similar to this proposal of the Government, and the bottom was, in fact, knocked out of the whole case by the statement of Lord Milner, who had admitted that the country was not on the verge of ruin. His hon. friend would no doubt tell them that South Africa was in a dangerous and difficult position, but there were two things to be done. One was to adopt an evil course, and the other to forswear the evil and reduce the expenditure. Seeing how great the interests involved were he thought it would be a wiser course to demand that the expenditure should be reduced rather than do an admittedly evil thing in order to increase the revenue.

He now came to the question, Who was to decide this matter? It was obvious that it could not be the people of the Transvaal, because the Government had not yet decided to give them self-government. To say that the Transvaal had decided the matter when only three meetings, two or three newspapers, and Lord Milner, who had changed his mind upon the question, had declared in favour of Chinese labour, was only trifling with the matter. Who was to decide? His right hon. friend might point out that it would have been competent for him to sanction this Ordinance without reference to the House, but the inherent power rested here, and here alone. This House had the power to turn out the Ministers and put in those who would do their will in this and other matters. The power rested in the House as well as the responsibility. What facilities had been given to hon. Members to really arrive at the truth in this matter? This was the strongest part of their case. How long had hon. Members been able to read the bulky book of evidence? He believed it was only possible to obtain it on Saturday morning last. The evidence had a startling bearing upon the whole question, because it showed that those who were in favour of another solution rather than the Chinese solution, were undoubtedly treated as hostile witnesses. That was a most extraordinary state of affairs. If they turned to the evidence of the Government Commissioner of Mines, who was the most important witness, they would find that from start to finish there were perpetual recriminations. It certainly was not the sort of Commission they were accustomed to have in this country. In Question 13976 one of the members of the Commission asked a witness if he left his employer because he was a better politician than an engineer. Was that the sort of question which ought to be put by a member of an impartial Commission? Owing to the excited state of political feeling, there could be no doubt that at the time this Commission sat, those witnesses who were opposed to the avowed desires of the mining interest were treated as hostile witnesses, and it was not a fair Commission in the sense in which they understood it. But there was another point. What was the Commission inquiring into? What evidence had the House to decide this momentous question upon? That Commission was only to inquire how far it was possible to obtain an adequate supply of labour from Central and Southern Africa. The question of Chinese labour was expressly ruled out, and there had been no inquiry into the advisability of employing Chinese labour in South Africa. It was a travesty of justice to ask the House to decide a question of this kind when there had been no inquiry into the question they were discussing. What was the answer of the right hon. Gentleman in the matter? There was no answer except that they were being hustled. He did not believe the House of Commons meant to be hustled in the matter. There had been no inquiry whatever into the desirability of Chinese labour and the possibility of obtaining white labour. They might rightly claim before they undertook so momentous a step, so absolutely contrary to every precedent—the imposition of this kind of labour on a country which was shortly to receive self-government—that there should be some inquiry. There ought to have been a great deal more knowledge on the subject presented to Parliament. He knew that a great many hon. Members on the Conservative side of the House were as bitterly opposed to this proposal as he was himself. Let them suppose that the forces against them were sufficiently strong to allow the Ordinance to be sanctioned. He understood from his right hon. friend that this was the moment when this matter was to be decided. If the Ordinance was sanctioned in the House by the rejection of the Amendment, his right hon. friend would communicate to South Africa the adhesion of the Government to it, and the importation of Chinese labour would then forthwith begin. If that was so, it was one of the most important moments that this House could well conceive of, involving as it did the welfare of the whole colony.

What was going to be the position of affairs? Whom were they going to have on their side in South Africa and whom against them? Undoubtedly this country, or rather this Government, would have on its side the mining interest acting entirely from their own point of view in the interests of their share-holders, whose interests alone they had to consider, and rightly so; and they would have on their side a certain number of Englishmen in the Transvaal. He did not suppose that the Colonial Secretary suggested that the whole of the 7,000 out of the 12,000 white men employed on the mines were necessarily in favour of it. When employers handed round a petition it was wise to sign it. He absolutely assented to the telegram which was read out that no undue influence was used to obtain signatures, but it must be apparent that if employers wished a thing, and said they wished it, it was wiser for the workmen to accept it. The Government would have on their side a proportion of the 7,000. Whom were they going to have against them? They were going to have against them all the other Englishmen. They were going to have gainst them the whole of the Dutch population. [An HON. MEMBER: No.] He heard an hon. Member say "No." He presumed his meaning was that, whereas the Boer leaders, Botha and Delarey, had issued a pronunciamento that the Dutch population was opposed to this that they did not mean what they said, and that their people would not follow them? The House had been twice taken in by that, and bitterly had this country cause to repent of her folly in not believing that the Dutch people stuck by those who had led them in peace and war. They had better not make the same mistake again. The Government, in this matter, would have practically the whole of Cape Colony against them. He might say that he received a telegram last night which he believed to be true—he would be corrected if he was wrong—saying that every one of the members recently elected to the Cape Colony Legislature had expressed themselves strongly opposed to the introduction of Chinese labour. Surely it was madness, in the face of this position, to go through with the thing with this indecent haste, because after all what was the idea with which we went through the war from which we had just emerged. He remembered reading an eloquent speech by the hon. Member for West Birmingham, which was delivered to Delarey's men in presence of Delarey, during the tour of the right hon. Gentleman in South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman said that he had often seen the graves of British soldiers who fell in the war, and that he had often seen side by side those of Boers who fell in the same struggle, and he concluded by saying —"They sleep together in peace. Let us who live, live also in peace." Fine words finely spoken. Now we come to the test of what we were going to do. These men with whom the right hon. Gentleman pleaded for peace have unanimously protested that this proposal is a mistake, and that it would be a national disaster of first magnitude. Was that likely to procure peace? He could not refrain from quoting a beautiful verse which was made on that very speech—

"They sleep possessed of her they sought,
Briton and Boer side by side,
They both alike for freedom fought, for freedom died.
Here let us bury outworn hate
For ever neath the tear-stained sod,
And build a new and better State for man and God."

Was that what they were going to do? He knew this House did not like sentimentality, but he claimed that this was no mere empty appeal. The hearts of the people at home had been bitterly stirred. There was hardly a family that had not suffered, but they thought that we fought for great ideals, but so surely as we imported 150,000 slaves into South Africa, so surely would we shatter these ideals. He did not believe this House would consent to it. Two voices were calling to them now. One called to them from every self-governing colony that had had any experience of the evil of which he told the Government. A vast majority of the people of South Africa, and he believed an overwhelming majority of the people of this country asked them not to be in a hurry, not to be in indecent haste, when they were without proper knowledge about to assent to this proposal. On the other hand, we had the cry of self-interest that we might be a little richer, the cry that the £12,500,000 of gold now being dug might be increased to £16,000,000 as before. Surely this House would not consent to it. He did not think the force this Government could bring to bear on hon. Members would make them consent. He had advanced reasons for saying that they should weigh this proposal long and carefully. They were bound, not only by every tradition of this House, by every precedent, but in honour to many persons whose wishes in this matter were going to be flouted, to do this. When we made peace with the Boers, we pledged ourselves that we would not give votes to the natives until they had self-government. He asked hon. Members whether the importation of great numbers of Chinamen and the possibilities that entailed was not a graver step than the giving of votes to the natives. He thought so, and yet they were giving no chance to those people of expressing their views in any constitutional manner whatever. Our honour was bound up in this proposal. We had bound ourselves that the Colonies should have a say in the settlement of this matter He had spoken to many representatives of the Colonies on the matter, and he could assure the House that every one felt bitterly upon it. We were bound to consider the wishes of our self-governing colonies; we were bound to consider the Dutch with whom we had made peace; and we were bound in honour to consider the bitter cry of the people of this country who had suffered. It was only a little more than four and a half years ago that it seemed very likely that South Africa would be, as had been prophesied, the grave of England's greatness. Let this House see to it to-day that it was not the grave of England's honour.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words, 'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is highly inexpedient that sanction should be given to any ordinance permitting the introduction of indentured Chinese labourers into the Transvaal Colony until the approval of the colonists has been formally ascertained.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. LYTTELTON: My hon. and gallant friend who has just sat down has advanced a great number of highly questionable propositions, and he has inferred with the courage of youth, from the silence in which they have been received, that hon. Gentlemen upon this side admit them to be true. He has taken, I think, as among the admissions made by us on this side of the House that we have acted upon insufficient evidence. I traverse that absolutely.

*MAJOR SEELY: I never said so.

*MR. LYTTELTON: He has taken it that it is admitted upon this side that it is in itself an evil to bring Chinese into a country whose necessities of labour demand that the existing labour should be supplemented. I must not be taken as admitting that. I admit, however, that it is an unfortunate circumstance when a country is unable to provide labour for itself. It is also, I think, more than unfortunate, but still an undoubted fact, that white men in Africa will not do the work which black men do. So far only do I make any admission to my hon. and gallant friend. To the complaint that the House has been rushed in this matter a sufficient answer is furnished by the speech of the mover of this Amendment. No one who heard that speech—though, of course, I do not agree with it and I think it did me some injustice—could for a moment doubt that a man of industry and a man of ability, such as my hon. friend is, had abundant time for mastering not only the principles but the details of this matter. My hon. and gallant friend said he understood from me that I was going to sanction the removal of the suspensory clause inserted by my request, at the instance of the Leader of the Opposition, in order to give Parliament time, not to discuss every line of the Ordinance—that would be a wholly absurd proceeding for the Imperial Parliament—but in order to raise before the people of this country in the fullest way the general question whether the introduction of Asiatic labour into the Transvaal is right or wrong. Let me say at the beginning that the hon. mover of this Amendment did me an injustice when he said I was amenable in this matter. Does the Blue-book show it? The Blue-book shows that I endeavoured to take every possible precaution to ensure that the fullest deliberation should be given to the discussion of this matter, and the Government only approved of the principle of this measure with the distinct conviction and belief that the labour which would be introduced would not be a substitute for, but would be supplementary to, the labour now employed. They acted with the conviction that this step would increase and not diminish white employment. Further they are absolutely convinced that the measure is one of extraordinary urgency, and that the vital economic necessities of the Transvaal demand it. [OPPOSITION cries of "Why?"] I will come to that presently. I put last, but I am certain that no one in this House who knows me will suppose that I think it last in importance, the fact that the Government consider that these ends may be achieved without any ethical or moral stain either upon the Chinese who may be introduced or upon others.

Before I endeavour to make good these arguments may I make a few general observations to the House which I most earnestly commend to both sides of the

House for their serious consideration? Do not approach this subject in the air. Look steadily at the actual facts of the situation. Just consider what the economic situation of the Transvaal is. When the Transvaal was annexed by this country, when Lord Milner took the government over, he did not fashion the economic structure of the country, he took it over ready-formed. And what was it that he took over ready-formed? He took over a very abnormal economic condition, a vast, organised, and wealthy industry imposed upon an almost rustic community. Lord Milner did not frame that industry; His Majesty's Government did not frame it; it was framed by the great ability of those who instituted it—erected in the course of only twelve or fourteen years. Most States pass through successive stages. They are pastoral, then rural, then cities grow up to minister to their needs, and, finally, you have an industrial community, industries generally being the latest growth in a State. But in the Transvaal there has been no such process. Johannesburg, with its tall steel chimneys and great white spoil banks, rises almost straight out of the veld. It is not a mining camp, as many great mining industries have been. The wealth which is being worked there is known to exist just as well as is the coal in South Wales and even better than on the diamond fields at Kimberley. The rate of output of this extraordinary place was £18,000,000 per annum before the war.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): £20,000,000.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I prefer to keep within the mark. That output practically represented the whole wealth, the whole taxable capacity of the State. It is thus, that, after the annexation, the rulers of that country are confronted not with the problems of a small State, but with all the problems of an advanced industrial community. From those facts there follow, as it seems to me, two things—first, that it was necessary to form and equip a fully civilised and modern Government; next, that it was necessary, having formed that Government, by means of the resources of the mines to endeavour to develop the residue of the country so as to bring the body into proportion with the head. It was a peril, and it is a peril, that you should have a State with a gigantic and wealthy centre and with the other portions undeveloped. It was the policy of the Government, by making roads and railways, by land settlement, by irrigation, to bring up this State into line with Johannesburg, its head. Men are better than minerals.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): What we want is free men.

*MR. LYTTELTON: If you use the resources of this gigantic industry for the purpose of developing the whole country, surely you are doing a right, politic, and statesmanlike thing for the community. A strong rural community, well backed, is that without which no State is really secure. Lastly, we have spent £250,000,000 and made great sacrifices for that country. We have—I think I was one of the first in this country publicly to advocate it—repatriated the Boers; we have reconstructed their farms and stocked them to the best of our ability. We wish the Boers well, but we also wish well to our own people. We do not wish—it would be against human nature—that when we have made this gigantic effort it should be for the benefit of the Boers alone, and that we should leave our own people uncared for and in a minority. May I summarise what I have been endeavouring to say? I have said that the economic situation when this country annexed the Transvaal necessitated the institution of a well-organised and a well-equipped Government, and an attempt by that Government to develop the country by means of the wealth of the mines, so as to make it an organic and proportioned whole, and thus attract the Briton to come in with the Boer and possess the land. I submit to the House, whether they agree with it or not—and I should rather judge from the way they have met it that they do agree with it—I submit that that policy was a wise one. It is, at any rate, a coherent and far-seeing policy. But look at what it has involved. It has involved a substantial cost and we have laid a debt—and this House has assented to it—for the purpose of developing this country in the manner which I have described we have laid a debt on the country of £35,000,000

I have said the country would be well able to meet these charges. The gold in the land is to the eye of science actually visible. The machinery is equipped to get it, but the labour only is lacking for the purpose. I ought to read one or two extracts only. Sir Arthur Lawley, on 30th October, said—

> "The financial position here to-day is most serious. I am of opinion personally that the only thing which stands between us and a general crisis is the sanguine hope of the early introduction of Asiatic labour."

On 29th September Lord Milner said—

> "The immediate prospect is very bad. There is complete stagnation of commerce and industry owing to the labour difficulty, and it affects almost every branch of revenue, especially the railways."

He adds—

> "There are no signs of an adequate amount of labour being obtained from the existing source of supply, and the consequent depression in every kind of business is increasing daily. The revenue is falling off, many people are out of work, and if the situation does not soon change a considerable exodus of the white population is inevitable. On the other hand, there is nothing wrong with the mines except insufficiency of labour. They are equipped for the production of at least 60 per cent. above the present, and plenty of capital for further development is assured if only the labour difficulty is overcome."

The hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment referred to 300,000 Chinese being required.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: That is in the Report.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The Report said that that number of labourers might be required in the future, but there is no authority for saying that 300,000 Chinese would be necessary. Lord Milner went on—

> "No one, indeed, any longer supposes that the experiment of Asiatic labour, even if successful, can do more than supplement the local supply or justify any relaxation in the immense effort that is being made to develop the latter . . . But in the opinion of the best judges we may hope gradually to obtain an amount of labour from Asia which will substitute steady and substantial progress for the present complete stagnation."

I ought, perhaps, to give the House an independent authority on this matter. Mr. Birchenough, in his report on the financial condition of the country to the Board of Trade, having dealt in the fairest way with the question of Asiatic labour. He said—

> "The real danger of the situation lies in the prolongation of the present financial strain. It is really a race against time, and that is why experiments, however well-meaning, which take years to show their results are impracticable. The trouble of the problem is the difficulty of obtaining labour. There is no dispute as to the wealth which lies in the Transvaal, nor is it denied that the essential conditions which affect the gold mines are more favourable than before the war, with the single exception of the labour supply. But, as I have indicated, the whole of the industrial and commercial interests of the Transvaal are too important for it to be allowed to stand indefinitely in the way."

Now, I say that the credit of the new States, on which the prosperity of South Africa as a whole depends, is very vitally at stake in this matter. The House knows from the Blue-books that the deficit anticipated as the result of the shortage of the present financial year is no less than £350,000. This House has, without a division, imposed the obligations to which I referred at the beginning of my speech, which must be defrayed by the mines—the obligations, that is, of discharging the cost and expense of this newly equipped and expensive Government and the cost and expense of the equipment and development of the country, including the interest on the £35,000,000 loan. I am not simply speaking now of the moral question. Can you, as a matter of economic prudence and policy, having laid this great burden on a community, deny them, if they put proper restrictions and precautions upon it, the opportunity to discharge the obligations which you have so laid upon them? Now, Sir, you may say, and I fully accept the rightness and relevancy of the challenge—you may say: "Granted in your favour that you have established a political and economic case for the introduction of Chinese labour, yet across your path in proposing that policy lie obstacles, social, industrial, and moral, which no considerations of economics or policy can remove." That is the issue.

I take first the political issue. The mover of the Amendment said that Lord Milner had been always in favour of Chinese labour. He is entirely inaccurate as to that. Lord Milner was not in favour of it at the beginning of

1903. The hon. Member also said that the reason why the proposal had been made was that I was more amenable than my predecessor. That is also inaccurate. My predecessor's views on this matter were stated as long ago as March of last year, when he said—

> "I ventured, when I was in South Africa, to promise, at all events on behalf of my own Government—and I believe I can safely do so on behalf of the whole House of Commons—that although technically they"—

the new colonies—

> "were Crown colonies, and as such subject in the last resort to any ultimatum that may be propounded from Downing-street, the Government would treat them in all matters in which Imperial interests are not directly considered as if they were self-governing colonies."

And the hon. Gentleman, I am sure unintentionally, endeavoured to convey to the House that my predecessor's mind was made up on this subject. He is quite inaccurate again. On 27th July last, in answer to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Monmouth, my right hon. friend said—

> "As long as the opinion of the Transvaal is hostile"—

that is, to Asiatic labour—

> "the right hon. Gentleman may rest perfectly satisfied that I shall not assent to it, and I shall certainly not be a party to imposing it on a hostile majority. But the right hon. Gentleman asks me what the future is likely to be. I think it is very likely that the opinion which is now hostile may not always be hostile, and I have received information—I do not know exactly what importance to attach to it at the present moment—that amongst the Boer farmers the pressure for labour has become very acute.'

I only want to show that my predecessor laid down the principle which the Government have adopted on this question—namely, that of treating these colonies, as far as possible, as if they were self-governing, and I have read that extract to show that my right hon. friend was aware in July that opinion was coming round on the question.

Now let me just enumerate the precautions we have taken before we venture to ask the House here to say that we have obtained a satisfactory pronouncement of opinion from the Transvaal. Before the Transvaal Government moved in the matter at all, a private member was directed to bring forward by way of resolution the question, aye or no, whether Asiatic labour should be introduced. On that resolution every official member had entire freedom to vote according to his own convictions. That liberty, which I think everybody here, even the Member for Northampton agrees was rightly accorded to them, was exercised. The result of the debate on the resolution brought forward by a private member was approved by a vote of twenty-two to four. Of the unofficial members nine to four voted in favour of the proposal. These unofficial members were collected from various parts of the Transvaal. They were representative men. Of the majority there were four Boers, two were mining men, two were leading men in business. One was a British farmer who had been living there for many years. That was the composition of the majority of the unofficial members. The thirteen official members of the Assembly all voted in favour of the resolution. [Cheers.] I suppose by that cheer it is meant to imply that they did not act honestly or according to their convictions. I absolutely repudiate that. Yes, Sir, and I have some right to repudiate it, because I have seen many of these gentlemen. Some of them belong to the party which I now confront. They belong many of them to a party which has opposed what are called "capitalists," and I should like any one here who has ventured to indulge in that sneer at the expense of absent men to get up in his place and say one single word in the face of South Africa and his own friends there, derogatory to Sir Richard Solomon, to Sir Godfrey Lagden, to Mr. Duncan, and to many others who have worked themselves to the bone on behalf of the State. Is this a new opinion in South Africa?

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge Univerisity): Yes.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: Yes, the Member for Cambridge University says. He is generally too well informed. At the beginning of 1903, only a year ago, the intercolonial conference, called the Bloemfontein Conference, assembled, containing representatives of every State in South Africa. So far as Cape Colony was concerned—the only State of South Africa which has since declared itself hostile to the principle—Sir Gordon Sprigg, Mr. Molteno, and another member of the Bond whose name for the moment I forget, were chosen by their Parliament as representatives of the State on whose behalf they appeared. Every single State, including Cape Colony, passed a resolution with a unanimous voice. That resolution was that native labour was insufficient south of the Zambesi to carry out the labour requirments of South Africa, and recommended that, subject to proper restrictions, Asiatic labour should be introduced, pronouncing at the same time that Asiatic labour should be of a temporary and not of a permanent character. That is the situation affirmed again in 1903, as my hon. and gallant friend said, affirmed so far as Cape Colony is concerned as far back as 1876, showing it was no new thing. It was no paradox, so far as the Cape was concerned, that this Commission was going to prove. In the opinion of Rhodesia, Natal, the Transvaal, Orange River Colony, and Cape Colony; all those five States, represented by five or six members for each, voted unanimously affirming the proposition. It seems ingenuous on the part of my hon. and gallant friend, but one expects ingenuousness from him, to suppose that the judgment of Cape Colony which affirmed the resolution has been wholly unaffected by the circumstances of the general election, which was proceeding, when it next came to declare itself. To those who are experienced in this House I will not labour that matter. The inference is obvious.

I pass from that to the Boer letter of three or four days ago on which my hon. friend seems to place so much reliance. I ask the House for a moment to follow the circumstances under which that letter was written. On 28th December, this debate on the resolution, aye or no, should Chinese labour be introduced, was before the Legislative Council. After the passage of the resolution by a majority of twenty-two to four, six weeks, or nearly six weeks, elapsed before the publication of the Boer letter. During that time and during the occurrence of the debate in the Transvaal Assembly every possible opportunity was given for the collection of Boer opinion in the matter, and Mr. Hull, who was one of the four who opposed the introduction of Chinese labour, ventured to quote in that Assembly that General Botha was against the introduction of Chinese labour, and that he spoke representatively on behalf of the Boers. That was what Mr. Hull said at that very debate. How did General Botha receive it? He repudiated Mr. Hull's authority to make any such statement.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): Or any statement at all.

*MR. LYTTELTON: My hon. friend is quite right. I will not push this too far. He repudiated Mr. Hull's authority to make any statement on his behalf. The point is not that which the hon. Member for Camberwell thought I had in my mind. All I seek to establish by that fact is that at that time General Botha knew perfectly well that there were people debating this question; are the Boers or not in favour of this Chinese labour? He would not allow anybody to pledge their word on his behalf.

*MAJOR SEELY: Let him speak for himself.

*MR. LYTTELTON: My hon. and gallant friend says "Let him speak for himself." Yes, but when would have been the proper time to have spoken? Why, then, Sir. And is my hon. and gallant friend so innocent as to suppose that if it had been true that General Botha had the right to speak for the Boer population, and if he would not have been repudiated had he done so then, that he would not then and there have contradicted him. General Botha, knowing that statements were being made on 28th December or thereabouts that the Boers were against this measure, would not allow any statement to be made on his or their behalf at all. He lies by for six weeks, and then, when the whole thing is settled; when the resolution has been passed, the first reading, the second reading, and then the third reading; when no less than six weeks had passed, in which if it had been the fact that he represented the Boers in this matter, and that they were opposed to it, he would have had abundant opportunity of making statements to that effect; then he makes this protest.

Having had many opportunities of studying a good many of the Boers' characteristics at first hand, I say that they would be the first to despise you if you were taken in by a device so palpable. The mover of this Amendment would not find me amenable to that kind of manœuvre. I mean the manœuvre of suppressing your opinions and those whom you say you represent when the matter is before the proper and constitutional authority and then, when the final stage of the Ordinance has been passed, writing a letter contrary to all the facts which had reached me.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: On 6th January in a Dutch paper is an interview with General Botha, in which he expressed his opinion as being strongly anti-Chinese. That is in your own Papers presented to-day.

*MR. LYTTELTON: At an interview. That interview was not made public for some time afterwards, and no communication was made of this view to the Government, so far as I am aware. What is the situation then? We are asked by my hon. and gallant friend, who understands these matters so well, that when full opportunity has been given to the Boer leaders to express themselves in a constitutional way, and when that opportunity has long gone past, and the Legislative Council have passed the Ordinance, to yield to a belated and unconvincing demand made at the last moment, when everything else had failed. But who are the Boer leaders, and what title have their views upon this question to prevail upon the views of hon. Members opposite? Do they think that anybody speaks from an eminence on this subject when he is in favour of dealing with the shortage of labour in the Transvaal by the expedient of forced labour? Do they think that anybody whose opinion is of much weight in this matter wishes to deal with this difficulty by the expedient of breaking up the native locations, and forcing the natives of Africa into the mines, or on to the farms by such methods? Now let us investigate for a moment the pretensions of these gentlemen on this point. I am not blaming them for having their views, but I do blame hon. Gentlemen opposite for regarding them as great authorities upon this topic to whom we ought to defer. General Botha is of opinion that there is a great shortage of labour on the farms, and the method which he suggests in his evidence before the Commission is that you should break up the native locations and enforce squatters law. General Delarey does not go so far, but General Cronje and several others whom I can quote if necessary, gave evidence before the Labour Commission complaining of the shortage of labour on their own farms, and suggesting the expedient of enforcing squatters law (which prevents any natives beyond five families ever settling on a farm), of breaking up the native locations or native reserves, like Basutoland, and of driving them out of the land which belongs to them—in order to do what? To serve them on their farms. This is a matter which I can assure the House is very relevant at this time. If instead of bringing Chinamen, who come voluntarily, who earn far better wages than they would in their own country, under circumstances which I shall detail to the House in a moment, if instead of bringing these tough members of an old and tough civilisation to do this work, which we believe they are anxious and willing to do, you are to take—and I know nobody who would be more averse to this than hon. Members opposite—if you are to take the Boer population by their leaders as desirous of breaking up the native locations, of forcing the natives into the mines, of driving them off the land that was theirs, then I say that you have the Boer leaders in a position which is intolerable to Members of this House and, I believe, to anybody who rightly regards the native populations of Africa.

It is said that we ought not to have been satisfied with this long and deliberate ascertainment through a constitutional method of the opinions of the Transvaal people. It is said that we ought to have a *referendum*. I cannot argue everything twice over, so I must ask the House to assume in my favour that it was established upon undoubted authority that this problem was a very urgent problem—that the necessity of going forward was an urgent and vital necessity in the economic condition of the country. I will tell the House why in a sentence. The mines are 30,000 natives short of the number employed in the pre-war period. We are told that we ought to have a *referendum* on this matter. Such an expedient is absolutely unknown in any portion of the British Empire. It is absolutely without precedent, and it would raise in all the Crown Colonies questions of the most difficult nature. But there is a more serious objection than any of these. At a moment when we are more than ever anxious to do everything we can to bind together the two peoples — Boer and British—it would raise questions about the franchise which I think anybody who wished these two peoples to live together in peace and harmony would regard as most undesirable at the present moment. Of course, although this does not seem to be the opinion of hon. Gentlemen opposite, it would take a long time to settle these questions in the first instance. Say it took two or three months to settle and adjust the various claims which the Boers would desire to have represented. How long would it take to form a register when you had settled these questions? I am advised by Lord Milner that it would take at least six months to form that register. Lord Milner is an authority on these things, and I assure hon. Members opposite that he is probably within the mark, because it took six months to form the register of the Johannesburg municipality, which is a much more limited area, and the population of which gave every assistance. Therefore we have at least nine months, and probably twelve months, before this *referendum* could be taken. Then what is the question to be? That is not a very easy thing to settle, moreover, as I can assure the House after the experience we have had of the Boers there is not much encouragement to think that we should get their real opinion even if we had a *referendum*. I therefore pass that by as really out of the question.

Now, Sir, I think it was admitted by the mover of this Amendment that blacks cannot do the work. We have heard almost *ad nauseam* of the endeavours which have been made to procure their assistance.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I said that I would not enter into that question.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I will not commit the hon. Member to that opinion, but I do not think there is much dispute about it on the part of those who have studied the question. I do not found myself entirely upon the Bloemfontein Conference, or upon the Report of the Commission which followed, or upon the votes of the Legislative Council, but what I do ask the House to consider is this. Does not the thing speak for itself? If you had no evidence by the Commission, no evidence by the Legislative Council, no evidence by the Bloemfontein Conference—even then does not the thing speak for itself? The mine-owners have been all over Africa endeavouring to secure African labour. They have been, through the Colonial Office to West Africa, through the Foreign Office to Central Africa and Uganda, through the German Foreign Office to East Africa, and they have been as far as Morocco and Liberia, but, chiefly through the opposition of the various Governments concerned, they have not been able to obtain the labour they require. I do not blame the Governments; they do not think they have sufficient population to spare for this work. But what I do ask the House to believe is that an honest and strenuous endeavour has been made to get labour from Africa itself. The correspondence in the Blue-book will show that in a moment. Notwithstanding these strenuous and persistent efforts, you have the fact that, although there is an equipment of machinery adequate to produce 60 per cent. more than in the pre-war period, you are actually 30,000 natives short in the mines compared with the number previously employed. More than that, you have also the circumstance that in Johannesburg itself the municipality were unable to obtain 1,000 natives to do the necessary municipal work. There are the facts; they speak for themselves; they cannot be contradicted. The reasons for these facts are principally that the war itself made a great disturbance; you have had very large works of reconstruction in the Transvaal, you have had the making of railways, the construction ot docks, Cape Colony, irrigation works, the work of rebuilding the farms and the necessary construction of work to make good the waste of the war. If that be the case, and nobody can deny that it is, you have an absolutely certain cause of the shortage in African labour, and an absolutely certain and recognised effect in the shortage in the mines, and even in the Johannesburg municipality.

I am afraid I have detained the House at considerable length, but this is a very serious matter, and I wish to give hon. Members all the information I can. The blacks cannot be found to do this work. I affirm most strongly that the whites will not do it. Let me say, in connection with what has been stated by the seconder of the Amendment, that New Zealand and Australia are the only self-governing Colonies which have protested against the introduction of Chinese labour. [SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : The Cape.]

*MR. LYTTELTON : Yes, I was wrong there is the Cape, that is a self-governing colony. I entirely agree that their opinions ought to be, and they have been, respectfully weighed by me; but they are not conclusive upon this matter, though they are entitled to every consideration. What is the opinion of Canada on this subject? Have all the dreadful consequences which my hon. and gallant friend portrayed exhibited themselves in British Columbia? Why, the Chinese were an absolute necessity. As in this case, I believe the necessity was temporary, and needed to give a basis to an industry which when formed the outside labour could be dispensed with. In Africa you want to underpin a temporary structure, and afterwards to fill in the foundations from the ordinary source of supply. Though the opinion of Australia ought to be respected, I think it was under some delusion as to the problem presented that the opinion was arrived at. Australia and New Zealand are white communities, and I have a good deal of sympathy with the desire to keep them pure white men's countries, but the problem is entirely different in South Africa. In Australia you have a standard of labour and the level is set by white men, but in Africa, where you have blacks in the majority of the population, it is inevitable that the standard is set by black labour; and the opinion I have formed from the facts is that where you have Kaffirs doing practically all the unskilled work of the colony, you may despair of ever getting white men from this country to compete with the unskilled labour of the Kaffir in his own country. I may challenge any Member who may follow me in this debate to give a single instance, except where it has been tried experimentally, of black and white men working side by side in South Africa. As Sir Charles Pearson wrote in 1895—

> "When the Kaffir does the unskilled labour, the British race begin to consider all labour but that of the highest kind dishonourable."

We may consider this an unfortunate fact, but I would ask the hon. Member for Battersea, who can speak from experience in Africa and knowledge of the working classes, does he believe that a decent working man would emigrate from this country, not to better himself, not to place himself in a different class to that in which he is in this country, but to do unskilled work in competition with Kaffirs? I say the feeling against it is universal, and I can say so from knowledge derived not only from people connected with the mines, but from our own soldiers and others. Not even the poorer Dutch will do Kaffir work for any time, though they might for a little while at three times the pay a Kaffir would receive. Even then, they would come to their employer and say—"Our self-respect has been degraded by doing this work which it is customary to leave to black men." It was the same thing with disbanded troopers in distress, and even with navvies. A thousand navvies were sent out for railway work, men who had been employed before on Government construction work, and they were obviously skilled workmen, for when they were put on piecework they multiplied their cubic feet of production from two to eight. If they had worked at that pressure all the time, though it would have been far from being economical, the result would have been less deplorable than it was. The men became disgusted at doing work to which the feeling of the white inhabitants was opposed; they were influenced by their surroundings; they grew sulky and discontented, and were brought home after being there seven months, because to have kept them there for five months more would have cost the Government an extra £40,000. I ask any Member interested in emigration—Would any working man ever leave this country for the purpose of doing unskilled work?

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): Of course he would.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I ask as a matter of fact—Is there any considerable stream of emigration from this country except with the hope of rising in the world? Look at the nature of the case. Men leave their homes, their kith and kin, and the enjoyments to which they have been accustomed. I venture to say that the only chance of ever getting white labour into the South African mines is first to fill up, if you can, your farming population and your skilled labour at the mines, and then in the future, as they prosper and multiply, possibly then, in time, you may overcome the deep-seated repugnance of white men to compete with black. The only experiment there has been was made by Mr. Creswell, of whom I wish to speak with the greatest respect. He is entitled to full measure of praise for his experiment. He made it in opposition to the whole experience of mining experts, who, I admit, may have been biassed, as men are biassed in matters affecting their own interests. But I think it is a very strange case when every engineer of the Rand is of an opinion contrary to that of the gentleman who made the experiment, and we have the known facts with which I have troubled the House. But I have here a letter, an extract from which I will read, and it throws considerable light on the white labour experiment. Mr. William Mather, late general secretary to the Transvaal Mining Association, replying to Mr. Creswell's statement on the subject, says—

> "After the close of the war Lord Kitchener gave his consent to the employment of ex-Regulars and Irregulars in the mines, and an arrangement was come to with the Chamber of Mines that they should be paid at the rate of 5s. a day all found, that being the standard rate of pay of Irregulars in the field. On all the mines except the Village Main Reef this arrangement was adhered to. Mr. Creswell did not observe the conditions; he only paid the men 5s. a day, refusing to pay £6 5s. per month for board and lodging, and also an additional 22s. for bedding."

the letter goes on to say—

> "The matter was taken up by the Transvaal Mining Association, and a number of summonses were issued against Mr. Creswell and orders obtained for the payment for board and lodging, so that, instead of the cost of the unskilled white man being 5s. a day it was actually 10s., as against 54s. a month and board and lodging amounting to 25s. paid to the native, giving the native £3 19s. a month, as against £12 15s. a month paid to the unskilled labour."

This is a matter of considerable interest in relation to this experiment, which, after all, was carried out on a small scale and under peculiar conditions on the Rand. Now if we ask for white men to come in—and I invite the attention of Labour Members to this—the result of bringing in unskilled white labour is not necessarily the employment of more British labour; there may be labourers of other nationalities, and the effect would be, not to increase British employment on the Rand, but to diminish it and to reduce the wages paid for it. Of course, it is perfectly clear that, if you introduce these foreigners in competition with British labour, inasmuch as their standard is much lower than the British one, the effect would be to lower the standard of wage. I was interested to see a statement made by the Rand correspondent of the official organ of the Labour Party of which, I think, we shall hear a good deal, or at any rate, of the body which the paper represents. I find in the *Labour Leader* of 16th January a letter from its Rand correspondent containing a criticism of this proposal to introduce whites to do unskilled work. I am aware that view has not prevailed with the Labour representation itself, and I am aware that a resolution has been passed against it. I have mentioned it as showing that the Rand correspondent of the Labour Party gives that view. I find also it is echoed by another paper which has some considerable weight and knowledge.

There are only two more topics with which I shall trouble the House, but I think they are important topics. I have endeavoured to show that the economical necessity is vitally urgent, and the political necessity also. I have endeavoured to show that the opportunity of getting further natives is for the present impossible; though I hope it will soon increase. I have endeavoured to show also that the idea of getting Britons to go out from this country to compete with the blacks in the mines is a hopeless dream. I hope that I have established these propositions, but I quite recognise that hon. Members have a right to say that the burden rests on us of showing that the remedy proposed to meet a great economic difficulty—the introduction of Chinese labour—can be introduced into that country without moral taint and without presenting the aspect or the reality of slavery. It is a perfectly legitimate demand, and I trust that the House will allow me to meet it shortly, and I hope conclusively. I entirely agree that the provisions for the reception and accommodation of the wives and families of these people should be clearly made. I undertake that they shall be made. We were advised in this matter by men the most experienced in the whole Empire on the subject of Chinese labour. We were advised that the coolies would not go without their womenfolk. Manifestly it would be most wrong that they should go without their womenfolk. I undertake that if they wish to bring their wives and families they shall be allowed to do so. [HON. MEMBERS: All of them?] All of them. I did not give a specific answer to a Question on this point the other day because the form of the question was—Would they all be accompanied by their wives and families if they wished it? Obviously it might be desirable for the labourers to go out in one ship and their wives and families in another. I undertake, on behalf of the Government, that all the coolies who desire to bring their wives and families shall have the opportunity to do so. If more is desired, then I undertake to fully consider and give effect to any reasonable demand made in connection with the matter. Hon. Members must remember that at present this matter is being considered by Mr. Evans, who is the representative of the Transvaal Government, and who has a life-long experience of Chinese coolies. Lord Milner had the advantage of the advice, when on the spot here, of Sir F. Swettenham, who has had thirty-three years experience of Chinese coolies in the Malay States. He has thoroughly discussed the matter with Lord Milner face to face. We have this advantage also, that we have the Chinese Government negotiating for and seeing to the rights of their labourers, so that in the first place you have a distinct undertaking that this provision shall be made for the accommodation of the families, and in the next place you have the best advice on the subject which can possibly be obtained, and, finally, you have the Chinese Government watching over the interests of their subjects.

Let it not be forgotten that this is no new thing which hon. Gentlemen seem to have opened up. I do not blame them for calling attention to it. It is quite right that they should do so. Coolies have been introduced under indentures into Natal, Trinidad, Fiji, Borneo, and British Guiana. The mover and seconder of the Amendment drew a lurid picture of the lot of these people; but, fortunately, their accounts do not conform to experience. They are drawn out of their own heads. I will make good that statement in a moment. At any rate I do not blame them for the vividness of their imagination. I do not intend to say more on the moral question than that. I honour the source from which this question was introduced. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishops of Rochester and Worcester are men whom all who know them honour and revere, and I understand that in another place the Archbishop of Canterbury was fully satisfied with the assurances which he received from my noble friend Lord Onslow.

There is one more point, and it affects not only the Chinese but also the community into which they are going. I think hon. Gentlemen were perfectly entitled to ask that safeguards should be given by His Majesty's Government. I trust that we have done so. The next and last question is the alleged slavery or condition of slavery into which the Chinese are supposed to be projected. Let me describe briefly the precautions. An official, appointed by the Transvaal Government, and wholly independent of the mines and responsible to the Government here, is to go to China, and on that side, in China, he is to secure and warrant by his certificate that every Chinaman who embarks upon this undertaking shall fully understand its nature and its terms; and, further, security is to be made for his comfort and sanitation during transit. He is then to be received at the port of entry to the Transvaal—which is at present intended to be Durban—by someone who is again to explain to him fully and carefully all the conditions of service. When he arrives at the mines he is no doubt to live in what is a Chinese village or location. It is considerably different from a native compound, because it is a place fitted for the reception of Asiatics, and is to be carefully prepared by those who know Asiatic customs and habits. It is to be prepared for him by those on the spot. We have heard some ridiculous exaggerations of the compound system which obtains there already, and which, it is said, is to be applied to the Chinese also. I do not know whether my hon. and gallant friend has seen a compound. He said that this was a cruel system. It is not so. Let me compare the language of exaggeration used by hon. Members who have not seen these compounds with the language of truth and sincerity used by one who has seen them, and who is one of the most zealous workers in the humanitarian movement of this country. Canon Scott Holland, the editor of the *Commonwealth*, a Christian social magazine, writes that the visitor to the mines is first distressed to think that the native should have been plunged straight from his kraal into the midst of a roaring manufacturing industry. But the visitor soon observes how shrewd the native is in avoiding bad and unfair conditions, and how much profit he manages to secure from his employment—

> "He walks off with his gold and gets him wives, and returns when he wants more to a place where he finds himself cared for. He is having no unhappy time, and his genial gaiety of heart carries him well through it."

I venture to think that that paragraph, written by a man who does more in a year for humanity in this country than many of us do in a lifetime, and one who has visited the native compounds, blows into a thousand fragments the absurd pictures of life in the compounds which have been presented to us this evening The attacks which have been made on the Transvaal Government have been unworthy and unjust. It was suggested that the mine-owners had got rid of every official of the Government who objected to the importation of the Chinese. Mr. Wybergh, who was referred to as having been got rid of because he opposed this project, was found by a Commission, long before the question of Chinese labour was raised, to have been incompetent for his office. By the kindness and forbearance of Sir Arthur Lawley he was allowed to remain in the employment of the Government for several months and then to resign on the pretext that he differed from the policy of the Government, and, after having been treated with such exceptional generosity, he thought it right to say that he had retired because of the capitalist leanings of the Government. I am sure Mr. Wybergh regrets that action now; yet his case is referred to by hon. Gentlemen opposite as an instance of the manner in which the Transvaal Government swept from their path every official who wished honestly to do his duty. I do not think hon. Gentlemen are in a position to know the reasons why Mr. Creswell resigned; and as for Mr. Monypenny, the editor of the *Star*, he wrote in that paper—which, be it remembered, was the property of the mine-owners and the most powerful journal in the Transvaal — able and vigorous expressions of his own opposition to the policy of the mine-owners. I do not think that many newspaper proprietors in this country would allow so able a pen as that of Mr. Monypenny to be employed for months at their own expense in endeavouring to demolish their policy. I do not say that the mine-owners should be exempt from criticism, but I do say that the language which has been used about them is ungenerous and unfair. Sir George Farrar, the protagonist in behalf of the mine-owners, is a man of the highest character

*MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): Was he one of the concoctors of the fraudulent "women and children" letter.

*MR. LYTTELTON: Sir George Farrar is a gallant man. He fought in the war and gained distinction in the field, and I think he and his colleagues ought to be credited with that sincerity of view with which, throughout the observations I have addressed to the House, I have endeavoured to credit their opponents.

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he had never listened to a more dishear ening speech. Where were all the assurances that had been given regarding the future of the

Transvaal and the Orange River Colony at the time of the war—a war which cost this country £250,000,000 and 20,000 lives ? How did we stand at the present moment ? The ex-Colonial Secretary told the House and the country only six months ago that in return for all these sacrifices the future of the Transvaal had the rosiest prospect. But now they had the present Colonial Secretary declaring that the Transvaal was on the brink of ruin. We had been told that by annexing the Transvaal we should acquire a white man's country ; now we learn that, while there might be a few superior whites, the working population must be black or yellow. The right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary complained that they, on that side of the House, had accused him of rushing the debate. He repeated the accusation ; the debate had been rushed with indecent haste, and the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was the best proof of that. The Colonial Secretary had told the House that he was drawing up regulations in reference to the importation and treatment of the Chinese immigrants of the most minute and far-reaching kind ; but the House had been asked to discuss this important question without having these regulations before it. The right hon. Gentleman said that the position of the Chinese in their compounds, as fixed by his regulations, constituted a moral question which the House had to decide. But the House was incompetent to decide it before it had his regulations before them. Was the Ordinance to over-ride the regulations or the regulations to over-ride the Ordinance ? He asked the right hon. Gentleman not to give his assent to the Ordinance until his regulations were made part of it. Then the right hon. Gentleman described the life of the Chinese immigrants in the Transvaal and said that he was going to allow them the choice of bringing their women and children there. That was contrary to the Ordinance as it stood at present. To hear the right hon. Gentleman speak of the regulations for the Chinese compounds one would have imagined that these compounds, to contain 300,000 or 400,000 Chinese, were going to be a sort of garden cities ; but in his opinion they would be concentration camps of the most hideous description. The right hon. Gentleman admitted in the opening part of his speech that this was a question of right or wrong. That was the issue on which the Opposition were prepared to appeal to the House and country. They maintained that it was a question of wrong which ought to be put right. The right hon. Gentleman's proposal was that a British colony was to be overrun by Chinese, but before making such a far-reaching proposition he should have made out an overwhelming case ; and he appealed to the House whether the right hon. Gentleman had made out anything of the sort.

Mr. Sydney Buxton.

The right hon. Gentleman had divided his observations into four or five points, and he wished to say, first of all, a few words on what the right hon. Gentleman called the constitutional question. The right hon. Gentleman said that the matter was one for the Transvaal, and not for us, to decide.

He would be inclined to agree if the Transvaal was a self-governing colony, but, even in that case, as grave Imperial interests were concerned, it would be a very serious question whether the right of veto should not be exercised. But the Transvaal was not a self-governing colony. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to think that the late Colonial Secretary could put it into the category of a self-governing colony by merely saying that he would treat it as such. If the inhabitants of the Transvaal were competent to decide such a momentous question as this, they were fit for, and entitled to, self-government, and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would give them self-government at the earliest possible moment. But the Transvaal was a Crown colony, and the right hon. Gentleman was directly responsible with the House of Commons and the country for its government. He was not ashamed to say that he was not willing to take the responsibilty of deciding such a momentous question for them. If the result turned out to be disastrous, the responsibility and blame would not be on the people of the Transvaal, but on the House of Commons. Moreover, the Secretary of State for the Colonies was not giving a mere passive assent, but was making himself a very active participant in the matter. The right hon. Gentleman was making himself responsible for transferring the Chinese to the Transvaal, for looking after them there, and for taking them back to China, and that was a very serious responsibility. The right hon. Gentleman argued cogently against a *Referendum*, but he himself thought that the only basis on which the question could be decided was to accord self-government to the colony, and let the duly elected representatives determine it. The right hon. Gentleman said, in his despatch to Lord Milner, that no direct Imperial interest was involved. On the contrary he himself said that very important Imperial interests were involved, and that the Colonies were entitled to have a voice in regard to the matter. It seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman gave a wrong impression in regard to the feeling at the Cape and in South Africa generally. The right hon. Gentleman said that opinion at the Bloemfontein Conference was in favour of this proposal. He stated that the conference declared that labour was insufficient, and that it recommended the introduction of Chinese labour, under restrictions. But the right hon. Gentleman must have forgotten the very limited and grudging terms of the Bloemfontein Conference. The conference stated that it was of opinion that the permanent settlement in South Africa of Asiatic races would be injurious and should not be permitted, but that it could agree to it only if the industrial development absolutely required the introduction of unskilled labour. That was different to what the right hon. Gentleman conveyed to the House. Then the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to discuss the question as to whether the Boers were or were not in favour of the introduction of Chinese labour. But that question could only be decided by granting self-government to the colony. On whose authority was the proposal based? It should be remembered that the Commission, on whose report practically the whole of this agitation, and the ordinance also, had been based, was specifically excluded from dealing with any of the questions as to an alternative supply of labour. On three material points—whether the cost of working could not be reduced, whether white labour could not be further employed, and whether the employment of Asiatics would be advantageous or otherwise, the Commission could not take evidence, or even express an opinion. By these terms of reference they were confined solely to the question whether there was a sufficient supply of native labour. It is true that the Commission did make some remarks on the subject of white labour. But it was quite clear from the case of Mr. Creswell and others, that there was practically no evidence forthcoming in connection with the question of the introduction of white labour.

The right hon. Gentleman impressed on the House the urgency of this matter, and he asked hon. Members to suggest an alternative. The alternative he ventured to suggest for the Transvaal was to "go slow." There was no doubt that the Transvaal had been developed at too rapid a rate. There were two interests involved. There was the Transvaal Government and the mine-owners. The right hon. Gentleman said that the House of Commons had placed on the Transvaal a large liability, but this was the work of the Transvaal Government itself. And it now endeavoured to justify its position in regard to the debt and the financial position, and to save its reputation, by bolstering up the country through the introduction of Chinese labour. He did not deny that there was at the present moment a deficiency of labour in the Transvaal, but he did not quite understand the arguments on which the right hon. Gentleman based his case. He stated that there were less Kaffirs by 30,000 at work on the Rand than before the war. But the evidence before the Commission showed that the Kaffir was far more efficient than formerly, Lord Milner himself estimating the advantage at 30 per cent. That would not leave the deficiency of 30,000 which the right hon. Gentleman mentioned. Then he himself did not think that the mine-owners had done their best to prove the absolute necessity of Chinese labour by first giving all the other alternatives a proper trial.

It was a most significant fact that while up to last July there was a monthly increase in the number of Kaffirs coming into the mines, that increase ceased on the appointment of the Commission. He could not think that was a mere coincidence. The right hon. Gentleman assumed that the hon. mover of the

Amendment was desirous of superseding all the Kaffir labour by white labour. That was not so. What they did point out, and with truth, was, that if the mine-owners were prohibited from bringing in Chinese labour and had to avail themselves of the existing Kaffir labour or of white labour the proportion of whites to Kaffirs would be increased. The right hon. Gentleman had overlooked the fact that already considerable steps had been taken in that direction. Before the war the number of Kaffirs per stamp was something like sixteen. It was now, as he understood, only nine or ten. And while before the war the proportion of whites to Kaffirs was something like one in fifteen, it was now one in seven or eight. That showed that under the pressure of real necessity white labour in the mines had been increased in proportion to Kaffir labour, and he thought that it was quite certain that if that pressure were removed the proportion would unquestionably diminish instead of increasing. He did not agree that the experiments that had been made in the direction of white labour had been fair tests. It had been stated that test experiments had been tried in the direction of white labour, but all the evidence went to show that no *bonâ fide* attempts had been made under proper conditions. The experiments had been made with discharged soldiers who did not take kindly to the work; while in regard to Mr. Creswell's experiments he had not had time to perfect them. The matter was very much in a nutshell. The whole point was whether, in the first place, even if a deficiency of labour could be shown to exist to the extent the right hon. Gentleman attempted to show, we should be justified in introducing Chinese labour. In the second place, the right hon. Gentleman had to show that there was not a considerable amount more of Kaffir labour available in South Africa, which, combined with economy of writing, machinery, and increased white labour, would not largely supply the deficiency. The right hon. Gentleman had not made out his case for the introduction of labour at all, and still less for the introduction of Chinese labour. He believed the conscience of this country and also that of the Colonies would be revolted if this Ordinance were passed and carried out. The right hon. Gentleman had suggested that if a certain number of Chinese were allowed as an experiment the number would not necessarily be increased. But why should that be so. They were told that if the Chinese were not allowed to be brought in, now, the Transvaal would go to pieces, but hon. Members must remember that when, in the course of a few years, necessity arose for a further number this same argument would be used, and with far greater force than it was being used now. If they once opened the sluice the Transvaal would be deluged with this yellow flood. On political grounds he protested against the proposal. If it were agreed to, it would diminish and not increase the number of permanent British settlers. On economic grounds he could not believe that it was to the interest of the country that these mines should be too quickly developed at once and the gold exhausted. On moral grounds he objected to the introduction of Chinese into South Africa. If this Ordinance were carried out it would be a blot on the scutcheon of England, and if the law was allowed to pass he hoped a future Government would find it possible to repeal it.

*MR. MARTIN (Worcestershire, Droitwich) said that he approached this subject from his experience of the introduction of Chinese labour into North Borneo. He had no hesitation in saying that the Chinese who came there, when properly inspected and selected, made most excellent citizens, taking their place in the municipal government and serving on juries, which were generally composed of one-third Europeans, one-third Chinese, and one-third natives. In all the trades which they undertook he found them also excellent citizens. Of course it was not exactly the same thing in this case. North Borneo was a tropical country where white men could not work in the fields and on the tobacco lands. But the whole problem before them, so far as he could see, was whether the mines of the Transvaal could be worked by white man's labour. From the evidence which he had gathered it seemed to him that not only could they not get white men to work in the mines at all, but even if they could, they would not work with Kaffirs, any more than white men could be got to work with the negroes on the cotton plantations in America. If that were not the case there would be an end to all the trouble in England with regard to the unemployed, because they could go out there and find work. The whole gist of the question was whether or not the Europeans could work in the lowest grades of work in these mines. There seemed to have been much misapprehension in the House as to who the mine-owners were. It was true that there was one firm which controlled a large amount of interest in South Africa, but beyond that the mines were cut up into thousands of shares which were held all over England. The mining capitalists were not the people in South Africa, but the hundreds of thousands of shareholders in England and other places. So far as the mine managers were concerned they tried to act honestly by the shareholders. All these things ought to be made quite clear in the first instance, so that they might enter into this subject without predjudice. He had been told that one company had three and a half millions of capital employed at temporary interest in London waiting to be spent on machinery and other things connected with mines as soon as labour could be secured. There were many more companies in the same position, and unless sufficient labour could be secured it would be impossible to carry out the investment of this capital in the way intended. He thought it was only right, therefore, if they were putting the prosperity of the Transvaal first, that before they refused to sanction the importation of Chinese labour they should be absolutely convinced that the work in the mines of the Transvaal was whiteman's labour. He did not think it was, and certainly the mover and seconder of the Amendment had not proved their case in that respect.

*DR. MACNAMARA thought the Colonial Secretary had done General Botha an injustice by saying he had kept back until the last few days his views as to the inadvisability of introducing Chinese labour into the Transvaal. As far back as 15th September, when under examination before the Labour Commission, General Botha attempted to state his views on the subject, but the Chairman of the Commission would not allow him to do so. The Legislative Council, the Colonial Secretary, and Sir George Farrar, had all rested their case on the finding of the Labour Commission. That being so, he had naturally turned to the proceedings of that body to find the grounds on which the demand for Chinese labour was based. Would it be believed that no mention of the question was permitted before the Commission. The Chairman would not allow the subject to come up, because it was not within the terms of the reference. That was, to say the least of it, extremely curious. The Commission was appointed in July last; the agitation in favour of Chinese labour had been active for twelve months, and it was somewhat curious that the question should have been especially excluded from the scope of the inquiry. In February, Mr. Ross Skinner was sent away with a Commission to ascertain the best method of introducing Chinese labour; in April Sir George Farrar made a speech advocating the proposal; in June Lord Milner showed that he was in favour of the introduction, under proper restrictions of Asiatic labour. In the face of those facts, how was it that from an inquiry instituted in July the question was excluded. The Labour Commission referred to the scarcity of labour, but it talked round the subject in a way that was not very illuminating to persons anxious to ascertain the real reasons for the scarcity. After reading the whole of the evidence he had come to the conclusion that the Report deliberately evaded the two real issues set up by the bulk of the evidence, viz., the question of the reduction of the rate of wages (which was only incidentally mentioned in the Report), and the question of the treatment of natives (which was not mentioned at all), From the evidence it appeared that the Basutos were kicked about and treated with great indignity, and that when maimed for life no compensation whatever was given them.

*MR. SPEAKER said he did not see how the point was relevant to the question before the House. The matter to which the hon. Member was referring was the treatment in the past of native labour in the mines. That was a different question from the importation of Chinese labour in the future.

DR. MACNAMARA said he was endeavouring to suggest the alternative of black labour. With regard to the treatment of Zulus, all he would say was, that if the evidence was true, there had never been a greater disgrace to the Union Jack than that such things should have been done under its auspices. The House was asked to agree to the Ordinance because the Legislative Council had adopted it. In another place the hope had been expressed that the Transvaal would be allowed to settle its affairs in its own way. If the Transvaal had been a self-governing colony there would be general assent to such a proposition. But it was not, and was not likely for a long time to be a self-governing colony. He had never yet said a single syllable in disparagement of Lord Milner, but having carefully read the Reports and the correspondence, he was beginning to lose faith in the judgment and impartiality of the man at the head of affairs in South Africa. The impression conveyed to him by the despatches was that Lord Milner looked at things as he had thought they ought to be. For instance, in his despatch of 3rd January, referring to the feeling in South Africa on this question, Lord Milner stated—

> "There is no change in the general aversion to Asiatics as permanent residents. But those who carry this aversion to the point of refusing to admit Asiatics as indentured labourers under condition of repatriation, even in the face of a proved insufficiency of other labour, are a small minority both among Boer and British."

If those who objected were only "a small minority," they were an extremely nimble stage army, because on nearly every other page of the Blue-book there appeared resolutions of protest, and so forth. Lord Milner further stated—

> "There is in every part of South Africa a number of men of unquestionable sincerity who are opposed in principle to imported labour under any circumstances. But I believe it is quite a minority, even in the Cape."

That was on 3rd January, 1904. On 5th December, 1903, Dr. Jameson wrote to the Governor—

> In view of the fact that legislation dealing with the introduction of Asiatics into South Africa will probably be considered during the coming session of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal, and bearing in mind the resolutions opposing such introduction unanimously passed by the Legislature of this Colony, I would approach your Excellency—now that no Parliament is in existence—with the view of steps being taken so as to ensure that, should they be admitted into any neighbouring colony, under no circumstances would it be possible for any imported Asiatic to find his way into this colony."

Even Dr. Jameson implored the Government not to allow any Asiatics to come into the Cape. Did this suggest that only a minority even in the Cape were against Chinese Labour? Lord Milner appeared to see things as he would like them to be. He, Dr. Macnamara, had been driven to the conclusion that this demand for Asiatic labour was the demand of financiers who were impatient, with their fingers itching to grasp the gold which was in the ground. The mover of the Amendment had replied to the suggestion that there was a financial crisis on the Rand, but there was another reason and it was that these people had got trades unionism on the brain, and they feared the solidarity of white labour, and the effect it would have, not only on labour but upon the government of the country generally. That came out in the Tarbutt letter, the Rudd letter, and the Milner reply to the White League. But they were afraid also of Chinese Trade Unionism. If they looked at the correspondence they would see how Mr. H. Ross Skinner described the customs of the Chinese in the various parts of the world. On page 79 he said—

> "A very potent force amongst the Chinese is a system of co-operation somewhat akin to freemasonry. They understand well the power and advantage to be derived from combination. In San Francisco there are six Chinese companies or guilds, and to one or other of these the great majority of Chinese immigrants used to contribute and become members. The system is far-reaching, but in the general application exercises a wholesome influence. These guilds transact business for their members, they supervise labour contracts, receive and deposit money, or remit same to China, and generally look after and take a lively interest in the welfare of the Chinese community. Another function of theirs is to make all the necessary arrangements, when so desired, to have the bones of deceased members sent to their relatives in China."

That was all right and proper, but Mr. Ross Skinner went on—

> "Such societies, comprehensive as they are, if established on the Rand, would have a very powerful bearing on the Chinese immigrants. In many ways, as in those mentioned above, they might be useful and beneficial, but their power might also become a danger."

Even the poor Chinaman was not to be allowed anything in the nature of combination. Then Mr. Ross Skinner proceeds—

> "To avoid such an emergency it is plainly desirable that all the present efforts to increase

> the supply of Kaffir labour should be vigorously continued with a view to balancing, as far as possible, the supply of Kaffir, Chinese, and other unskilled labourers on the mines. This principle might also be adopted in the cases of Chinese from different districts. For instance, experience points to the fact that it is unlikely that northern men would co-operate with the southern Chinese."

Therefore the country was to be split up, and they had a holy dread of trades unionism even amongst the Chinese. The South African War lasted thirty-three months, it cost £250,000,000 of money, 25,000 British soldiers died, 25,000 came home permanently maimed, and quite another 25,000 women, children, and men must have died in the concentration camps, all for this, according to the Government. But so far as the people of this country were concerned it would not be for this. He was afraid that the hon. Member for Dulwich was not in the House. But it was significant that only a few hours before the declaration of the poll in Dulwich the following poster stared him in the face in Dulwich—

> "Electors of Dulwich, beware! If any attempts are made to lead you to believe that Dr. Rutherfoord Harris is in favour of the introduction of Chinese labour into South Africa, remember it is a lie."

That poster was issued from the central committee rooms of the Member for Dulwich. He (the hon. Member) should watch with great interest the vote which the hon. Member for Dulwich gave on this Amendment, confidently looking for his support in the Division Lobby. The war, they were told, was not entered upon for Chinese labour, but to secure equal rights for all white men, the enfranchisement of the Uitlander, and to open up new fields of occupation for Britishers. The ex-Colonial Secretary, in a speech delivered on the 19th October, 1900, said the miners in the North of England voted Unionist at the last election, firstly, because they were patriots and Imperialists; and secondly, because the South African war was in a sense a miners' war, undertaken in order that justice might be done to the British miners in the Transvaal. At the present time there were two or three shiploads of miners out of employment coming back to this country, and the Government proposed to substitute for them Chinese. The Colonial Secretary seemed very much put about because the Ordinance for the introduction of Chinese had been termed cruel. He had no hesitation in repeating that it was cruel, and he invited hon. Members opposite to look for a moment at the conditions. The Chinaman was to perform unskilled labour only. What right had they to say that? He could only serve the person to whom he was indentured, but that person might lawfully transfer him to some other person, and he could not have any property whatever in minerals or precious stones. Surely to say he must not own precious stones was a work of supererogation. Surely all the precious stones in South Africa were already labelled, "With God Almighty's compliments to Eckstein, Bernstein, Goldstein, and all the other steins." In every way the Chinaman turned he had six months in gaol staring him in the face. It would also probably be provided that they should send his bones to China when he died, and that they should supply him with cheap materials for idols for his religious observances. That was the climax of hypocrisy. They sent missionaries out to win the Chinaman from his idolatry in China and now they were going to supply him with cheap Chinese idols in South Africa. In the face of all this he could not help thinking of the British soldier. He had not many ideals. But he believed that the British flag ensured freedom, fairplay, and justice for all. But what would the British soldier say when he knew that the sequel to all his suffering in South Africa was this indentured yellow slavery?

LORD ALWYNE COMPTON (Bedfordshire, Biggleswade): He will say it is all nonsense.

*DR. MACNAMARA said that if after this any self-respecting British soldier tore his South African medal from his breast and threw it in the gutter he would have his complete and entire support.

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

KING'S SPEECH (MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS).

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment [16th February] to Main Question [2nd February], "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, as followeth :—

"*Most Gracious Sovereign,*—

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to offer our humble thanks to Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament."—(*Mr. Hardy.*)

Which Amendment was—

"At the end of the Question, to add the words—'And we humbly represent to Your Majesty that it is highly inexpedient that sanction should be given to any Ordinance permitting the introduction of indentured Chinese labourers into the Transvaal Colony until the approval of the colonists has been formally ascertained.'"—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR DUKE (Plymouth) said that this was a serious question for South Africa no one who had endeavoured to understand South African affairs could doubt. By common consent it had been recognised since the war that the Transvaal had become the centre of the political and social life of South Africa. The Dutch, the predominant race in South Africa before the war, took all their proceedings with that view, and that had been endorsed by the Government in founding the new political fabric to which the Colonial Secretary just now referred in a speech which excited so much interest in the House. The true capital of South Africa was Pretoria; the economic well-being of South Africa seemed to the Dutch and their successors to depend immediately on the prosperity of the Transvaal, and to require for its success the development of its resources as rapidly and completely as possible. The Colonial Secretary described the extraordinary political and social conditions in that country. A complete modern city founded in the midst of a wilderness, or what was very little less; the centre of the greatest gold producing industry of the world, and of great industries connected with that industry, and an unique centre of wealth and power; the rest of the Transvaal either in the more fertile parts devoted to the use of pasture or agriculture, or left in the hands of a barbarous population. The right hon. Gentleman had described the difficulty of the task of establishing the institutions of civilisation, and machinery of civilisation, so as to bring the Transvaal as a community into line and on a level with its great industrial centre. The difficulty had not appalled either Lord Milner or those whose material interest lay in South Africa—who had devoted themselves to building up the mining and kindred industries. It need not appal those in Cape Colony, Natal, and Orange River Colony, or those in our own country, who recognised that the prosperity of the Transvaal, and in the first instance its mining industry, was the keystone of the edifice of the future national greatness of South Africa. The hindrance to the mining industry at present was lack of labour—a shortage of nearly two-thirds. The mine-owners required 164,000 labourers for the existing stamps, and a further 30,000 for development work now necessary; they had only 68,000, and they would not be able to maintain that number because the attraction of the mines was different now to what it was before the war. Then the Kaffir was poor, he was now wealthy and able to indulge his tastes and live upon his own land without labour which he regarded as excessive, and devote himself to those pursuits and pastimes which pleased the native mind. Before the war 40s. and 50s. a month was paid for native labour; 70s. and 80s. a month was now offered, but the labourer did not come. It might be well or ill that that should be so, but if the capital sunk in the mines was to fructify and be redeemed from the soil in which it was sunk, they must deal with the problem of finding labour for the mines in place of the declining Kaffir labour of South Africa. The question had been grappled with. The South Africans had applied themselves to deal with this matter, which affected their substance and prosperity so much, and to find a solution to the problem.

Two solutions had been proposed besides that now under consideration. One was the old Dutch solution of making the Kaffir work, and he did not think that too much attention in this discussion could well be given to the absolutely frank and candid terms in which the old masters of the South African native had discussed his present position. Their advice—and it was typical of what the masculine mind of the Boer had always regarded as the proper method to be applied to his brother the black—was to break up the locations throughout South Africa and "make the Kaffir work," which meant having a system of forced labour. That a law should be passed to call upon them to work would not make them work. It could only be done by passing a law with the sanction of punishment behind it. If that were done, so said the Boers, there would be plenty of labour for all the necessities of the Transvaal. The best comment upon that with regard to the attitude of the natives in the South African Colonies was the fact that of the 68,000 labourers at present employed in the mines, 88 per cent. came from Portuguese territory. The meaning of it was that within British territory forced labour did not exist for the native, and it was open to him to please himself, so long as he maintained himself, whether he worked in the mines or not. [Hear, hear!] He presumed by that cheer that hon. Members approved of that state of things. [Hear, hear!] But if they approved of it they must take it with the difficulties it created. They could not applaud the native and graceful indolence of the Kaffir which induced him, instead of hastening to the toil of the mines, to retire from labour and live in leisured ease amongst his wives, and at the same time advise those whose material interest was in the mines that there was an abundant source of native labour in South Africa. What there was, in fact, was 12 per cent. of 68,000 to fill the place of all the Kaffirs in our own colonies who used to recruit the labour in the mines. The Boer policy with regard to the natives might be enforced and they might be dragooned to the mines, but when questions of this kind were discussed it must not be forgotten that to every white man in South Africa there were six or eight or perhaps ten Kaffirs, and among them means of information and political organisation such as did not exist before the war. He would not dwell further on that alternative policy except to remark that it had been tried and it had failed. The war had made the blacks in South Africa wealthy and they had realised it. It had shown them what was the real bone of contention between the white races and they had realised it. After the war the course which any sane Government had to take with the natives of South Africa was to develop them on peaceful lines and by educational means, and so bring them into the general scheme of civilisation. They would not coerce them into the mines nor would it be the policy of any party in this country to do so. The second alternative policy was that recommended by Mr. Creswell, who recommended that the present native supply should be eked out with the labour of unskilled whites.

MR. JOHN BURNS: Hear, hear!

*MR. DUKE: The hon. Member for Battersea applauded that alternative; would he have the unskilled white and the barbarian from Central Africa pull on the same chain, fill the same barrow, and sit at the same board? Was it part of the hon. Member's scheme of policy that we should bring the white man, our poor brother in a racial sense, and the black man our brother in the ethical sense, together in this way; that they should go down together and prosecute their labour under equal conditions. If that was the view with which hon. Members opposite opposed the Government and supported the policy of Mr. Creswell then he for one would be glad to hear what the trades unions would have to say upon that subject. That was a proposal for the degradation of white labour, and any Englishman who regarded the matter carefully and who considered whether he was ready to take his place side by side and hand in hand with a native lately brought from some remote part of the African Continent, and share his daily life with that man, would at once repel the suggestion that that was a mode in which this question could ever be solved. But efforts had been made to solve the difficulty in that very way. It was not owing to apathy or policy of the mine-owners that mines were lying idle and that stamps were hung up, it was because there was no labour. Mr. Creswell made his experiment, and practical miners in South Africa were unanimous in the opinion that it was a dead failure, that so far as profit from the mines was concerned the Creswell experiment was absolutely unsatisfactory. The experiment of employing unskilled white labour was also tried in the Rand mines. In order to keep up an average of 400 men during the seventeen months that that was being tried nearly 5,000 men were passed through those mines. Anything less economic could hardly be imagined. It was stated that one of the benefits of the Creswell system was that it would provide for something like continuity of white labour and steady progress, and the result of it had been that in seventeen months 5,000 men had been passed through certain mines in order to ensure an average for those mines of 400 labourers. No one up to this period of the debate had stayed to consider by what kind of white labour it was possible to work the mines. Englishmen had had a chance of going to South Africa for a long while. The Englishmen who went to South Africa would not go there to work for the wages which would maintain a native; to an Englishman those would be starvation wages. He was informed that an offer had been made by a syndicate in the East of Europe to send 25,000 Hungarians to South Africa. Was that the sort of thing for which hon. Gentlemen opposite were striving? Italian labour had been tried in South Africa, with the result that the skilled white British miner did not propose to stay if the class of Italian who could be obtained at the wages the mines could afford to pay was employed. Was it proposed to catch the intelligent labourer in this country, if possible, and to teach him mining in South Africa in three or four months, and so level down the wages of the skilled miner? [AN HON. MEMBER: No]. The Cornish miner in South Africa knew better. One ground of objection to Mr. Creswell's proposals was that one of his objects was to reduce the wages of miners in South Africa and if practicable to have unskilled labour under the supervision of skilled labour, so that after the unskilled labour saw the work of the skilled miner for a few months it would be an easier matter to deal with the present high wages of the skilled miner. Was that one of the objects for which hon. Gentlemen opposite were exerting themselves? Those Cornishmen who had transplanted to South Africa the mining industry in which their race had gained aptitude by a thousand years of mining experience, almost unanimously approved of the Labour Ordinance. They could take care and were taking care of their industry by a steadfast opposition to the proposal of Mr. Creswell, which, at present, commended itself most to those Members on the other side of the House who felt when they put what might be an insuperable obstacle in the way of the policy of His Majesty's Government with regard to South Africa, that they ought to suggest some sort of alternative. It was not common for them to suggest an alternative on the other side. It was much easier to give vent to highfaluting talk about soldiers' medals and Union Jacks. When they waved the Union Jack for any but a legitimate purpose they had to suffer for it.

MR. JOHN BURNS: Especially when there is slavery underneath.

*MR. DUKE: The suggestion of slavery had reference to the Ordinance. Now the Chinaman had been depicted in the course of the debate as anything but an estimable person, but the Chinaman was good enough to come without any sort of restriction to work in the East End of London. Yet some hon. Members were not willing that with any sort of restriction he should work in South Africa.

*MAJOR SEELY: Why do not you let him in free?

*MR. DUKE said the people of the country did not want him in free. When his hon. and gallant friend's comrades in New Zealand, Cape Colony, and other parts of the British Empire found that his hon. friend's keen desire was that the Chinaman should go and stay freely among them the enthusiasm which he now commanded would be somewhat damped.

*MAJOR SEELY: No.

*MR. DUKE: I am not sure then that I know what my hon. friend's position is.

*MAJOR SEELY: The objection is that if he is so distasteful to the inhabitants that they will not let him in as a free man—which it is admitted is undesirable—he should not be admitted with modified freedom, which we call modified slavery.

*MR. DUKE: My hon. friend would prefer the Chinaman at large to the Chinaman in a compound?

*MAJOR SEELY: No.

*MR. DUKE said his hon. friend's objection was to limitations being put on the Chinaman. He would prefer the Chinaman at large.

*MAJOR SEELY said that was not what he said.

*MR. DUKE said he had not yet gathered whether the objection was to a Chinaman at large or in a compound.

*MAJOR SEELY: Both.

MR. DUKE said his hon. and gallant friend's objection then was to the Chinese race, than whom there was no more industrious, painstaking, long-suffering, honest people, he believed, on the globe. Any man who knew anything of the commercial dealings of Chinese merchants throughout the Far East knew that the word of a Chinese merchant was as good as the bond of any man in London. The standard of commercial integrity among Chinese merchants could not be surpassed. His hon. and gallant friend had so deep-rooted a distaste for a Chinaman that he could not tolerate him in the British dominions. That was not, however, the objection upon which the Amendment was founded. He did not say it was only the political objection or that the defeat of the Government was the only real objective, but his gallant friend had brought himself to think this proposal, like so many other proposals of the Government, must be wrong. The suggestion that the Chinaman was to flood South Africa was a fallacy, like so many other fallacies scattered abroad in this debate. Of 4¾ millions of Chinese who had emigrated in twenty-five years, upwards of four millions had returned to China. They did not want to settle abroad. The inborn dislike of the European to some Asiatic races justified the Government in imposing upon the Chinese desiring to work in South Africa, some such conditions as those in the Ordinance. He did not believe that any man who declared his true mind on this subject would say that he desired to see South Africa flooded with free Chinese labour and that South Africa should run the risk of becoming a Chinese country. The great necessity of South Africa was labour, and the gold which was to be exported was to be the motive power of the development of the Transvaal—he had almost said the regeneration of South Africa. He did not shrink from considering the position of South Africa. Cape Colony, Natal, and the Transvaal had formed their plans upon the belief that the gold output of South Africa was to continue. It was a mechanical certainty if we permitted it to proceed. The complaint made against the Government by the supporters of the Amendment was that they would not put or continue an absolute barrier against the employment of Chinese. The Government proposed to allow Chinese labour there and to put certain restrictions upon it. Capital was locked up in vast undertakings, and the expenditure of the Transvaal had increased by 100 per cent. for the purpose of developing the country and paying the share of the burden of the war which the colony had to bear. The real question before the House was whether it should declare itself in favour of the present stagnant condition of South Africa, which might bring about a speedy ruin, or whether the Government should be encouraged and assisted in this proposal, which would supply some additional labour to the mines in South Africa, and set free the golden tide which was to renew its prosperity.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) said he had given notice of an Amendment to the Amendment now before the House, but after consultation with a number of hon. Members he found the general opinion was that they should have a clear and distinct issue to vote upon, and that a second Amendment should not be put. He had put down his Amendment to the Amendment for this reason. The Amendment as it stood in the name of his hon. friend seemed to convey an impression that we would tolerate something in regard to slave labour if only it could be approved of or rejected, as the case might be, by a *referendum.* The Transvaal was a Crown colony, for which the Government of this country was almost, if not quite, as responsible as it was for the affairs of the home land; and what he objected to was to relieve, even in the slightest degree, the Government from the tremendous responsibility which they seemed to be assuming of the introduction of Chinese labour into that colony. He had a strong inclination to persevere with his Amendment, but as he had withdrawn it he would not pursue that part of his subject any further. He had the advantage of listening to the speech of the right hon. Member the Colonial Secretary, who, if he might say so, had made very good use of very rotten materials. The right hon. Gentleman utterly failed to prove his case, or to give a satisfactory reason why this great Assembly, which was the centre of the Empire, should be sitting there at the bidding of the gold-mine owners of Johannesburg to do their behest and rake the world through to provide them with cheap labour. To his honour be it said, the right hon. Gentleman particularly failed in that special behest. It would be further noticed that the right hon. Gentleman never once said that the Government approved of, and would fight, for the consummation of the Ordinance agreed to by the mining Parliament in Johannesburg. The nearest he got to it was to apologise for it. In the earliest part of his speech the right hon. Gentleman had assured the House that, if the Chinese came, they would be limited to certain areas, kept in compounds, not allowed to enter into competition with the higher grades of labour, and that they would be, all the time, mere beasts of burden of the lowest type. The right hon. Gentleman combated the suggestion that 300,000 Chinese were wanted. How did he know how many there would be once the flood-gates were opened? The Government's masters in Johannesburg would decide that, not the Government. They were the governors of Downing Street, and not the men on the Treasury Bench. The Colonial Secretary went on further to show that after all he would pamper the Chinese by bringing comforts into their villages, and by bringing their wives and children. A family averaged three children, and even if they limited the immigration to 100,000 men, that would mean the introduction of 500,000 Chinese into the Transvaal. It was said that if the Chinese escaped from the compound, or were away under permit for more than forty-eight hours, they could be arrested without warrant; but how could they arrest 500,000 people? The whole thing was preposterous and absurd. The Government were asking the House to agree to a proposal, which was being rammed down their throats by the gold-mining companies, for one purpose only—to allow the Chinese to come into South Africa to win gold at a somewhat less cost than they could get it by black or white labour. Once they agreed to that main principle, how were they going to put a limit upon it?

As he understood the Colonial Secretary, the right hon. Gentleman argued that if the Amendment prohibiting Chinese were carried, the resources of the gold authorities would not be exhausted; that if we rejected the Chinese, it did not follow that Britishers would take their place. He pointed out that there was cheap labour in Norway, Sweden, and Italy; but the distinguished Member for Plymouth had added another difficulty to Britons obtaining employment in the Transvaal. There were, he said, the Hungarians. [AN HON. MEMBER: And Poles.] Oh the Poles would be reserved for another advocate of this system of slavery; they were not firing all their shots at once. If they were reduced to the Hungarians, little as he sympathised with these slave-masters of Johannesburg, he hoped their bargain with the Hungarian workmen would be much more profitable and satisfactory than the War Office bargain with the Hungarians in regard to horses. There was room for improvement in that direction. The Colonial Secretary wished the House to understand that opinion did not run all in one channel in the Transvaal. He admitted that there were little differences and contrarieties in that colony; that he had had a petition. Was there a living man who remembered a single bit of history in connection with South Africa during the last seven or eight years. who would pay the slightest attention to any written or signed document coming from that tainted source. They had not forgotten a certain letter that was written and kept in order to be dated to suit the occasion. [Ironical MINISTERIAL laughter.] Yes, they could write letters and pigeon hole them for their own convenience, and it was easily understood that they would not be incapable of faking petitions, and using that gentle influence which was so well known in South Africa, and which had been so potent in many cases, to serve their ends in regard to getting up a petition in favour of Chinese labour. He had read the evidence in the Blue-books, and the Minority Report of the Labour Commission, which was not a Royal Commission at all. It was a sort of Tariff Reform Committee appointed in South Africa in order to vamp up public opinion in favour of cheap labour. There were lots of countries which would like cheap labour; there were lots of people in this country who would like cheap labour, and would not be particular as to the nationality to which it belonged. Were they going to run the risk of bringing shameful degradation on the British Parliament for the sake of aliens. How could they resist or reject appeals made by people nearer their own doors for cheap labour?

Now, in regard to the influence of these great capitalists, he did not object to them because they were foreigners; he did not care whether they were British or foreign—but he objected to them for pursuing methods to enslave black, white, or yellow labourers for the purpose of increasing their gains. He was against them and would oppose them to the best of his ability. What was the condition of things in Johannesburg at the present moment? The capitalists were all supreme, and Lord Milner, to judge from his despatches, seemed to be absolutely in their hands. He was not the High Commissioner of this Empire, sending home information simply stating facts. The whole of the despatches numbered 91 and 92 consisted of special pleading for his clients in Johannesburg; they were not the despatches of a statesman representing a great nation, sending home to his Government information which they ought to be in possession of. Not only was Lord Milner a partisan, but he actually used very thinly veiled threats that, unless the Government agreed to the demand of the gold authorities, they would repudiate the financial responsibilities of the Transvaal to this country. He had never read anything more improper in the whole course of his life, and certainly he thought this was a case for severe reprimand. Lord Milner admitted that there was some amount of loyalty in the Transvaal, but he said that if we pressed for the execution of these financial responsibilities we would be straining that loyalty to a degree of danger, and therefore he warned us to give every latitude to these people for their financial convenience. That meant, there was no doubt, for their financial profit. Last week, in order to show the undue influence which the great vested interests had in Johannesburg, he drew the attention of the Colonial Secretary to the delivery by the Post Office in this House, of circulars to Members of the House by some persons evidently interested in the success of the Motion for the importation of Chinese labour. The circular reached him by first post last Thursday morning, and the Blue-books containing Lord Milner's despatches were not in the hands of Members till Friday. A summary of these despatches had been obtained and printed somewhere and circulated to hon. Members.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Did the circulars come from South Africa?

MR. BROADHURST said that the circulars were neither dated not contained the printer's name, and there was no means whatever of tracing their origin. If hon. Members turned to page 7, and other pages, they would find that the body of the despatches was contained in the circular. Now, who obtained possession of the despatches? Who wrote the despatches at Johannesburg. Did Lord Milner write them, or some secretary of the Mine-owners' Association. It was an outrage on Parliamentary rights and privileges, and he hoped that the Colonial

Secretary would pursue his investigations and get to know who had first access to these very important documents before they reached the Colonial Office, and before they were circulated to the Members of this House. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would stand no nonsense about the financial responsibilities of these millionaires. They could afford to pay. A poor labourer who failed in his public payment of the education rate to the local authority, was summoned before a bench of magistrates and a distress warrant was issued against him unless he paid up. There were plenty of available goods in South Africa to levy upon, if it were necessary, and he hoped it would be done. A few years back, because Venezuela did not pay some paltry debt, owing to he did not know whom, the Government sent battleships to bombard Venezuelan towns. Let them bombard these fellows in Johannesburg. [Laughter.] Well, they could bombard from guns on land as well as from guns at sea, and he would make very short work of these men if they threatened to refuse to fulfil their financial responsibilities.

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford): Hear, hear!

Mr. BROADHURST said that he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman was getting so bright since he left the War Office. The Government were not going to get out of their difficulties in regard to Chinese labour by sheltering under the robe of Canon Scott Holland, nor any other authority. Hon. Members had to give a plain and distinct vote whether they were in favour of cheap yellow labour, whether they were in favour of slavery or in favour of freedom. Long speeches and reading extracts from petitions, and letters from men who had won great honour in the war would not avail on this occasion. They had tocome into the open. For the first time in his Parliamentary life, for the first time, perhaps, for many hundreds of years, they had witnessed the advent of a Government which had set up its representative to apologise and explain away the importation of foreigners into a British possession for no other reason than that these would work cheaper than British workmen. The Government were going to have it straight, and they should avoid all technicalities and stand up to receive their punishment. He and those who agreed with him were going to see who was for freedom and who for slavery. That was the issue they were going on in the division. They were going to discover those who thought it proper at the call or command of the gold authorities in South Africa, to forsake the traditions of our grand old country, of our liberty loving nation, that no slavery, black, white, or yellow, should exist, either for profit or pleasure on any spot of land where the British flag floated.

Mr. CUST (Southwark, Bermondsey) said he did not think it would be necessary to say much in answer to the remarks of the hon. Member who had just sat down. He complained of the *ex parte* nature of Lord Milner's despatches. There was only one point which might be noticed, and that was where the hon. Member declared that the Colonial Office and the Government of this country had never been able to stop the influx of Chinese, and the result would be that they would be doomed to such an influx of Chinese in South Africa as would be entirely beyond their power to control. If it was claimed that the Transvaal was a Crown colony then they could stop this influx. If, on the other hand, the hon. Member claimed that it was a self-governing colony then our responsibility falls from us. As long as they had the present system of government in South Africa, the moment the Chinese become inconvenient their influx could be stopped and their repatriation determined; but the moment they admitted that it was a self-governing colony the stopping of the influx of Chinese and their repatriation depended entirely upon the action of the self-governing colony. It seemed to him that the criticisms which had been made had been simply a rehash of the meeting in St. James' Hall. They were unable to follow the temperate meeting at St. James' Hall closely because of the prudential economy of space exercised by the newspapers in reporting it. They missed in that ungoodly fellowship of prophets a full flow of what Dr. Johnson would have called the anfractuosities of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Monmouth. They found strangely misplaced to-night the inverted intelligence of their hon. and gallant friend the Member for the Isle of Wight which was habitual to him, and they also found the clarion call of the Member for North Camberwell repeated to every man who had fought in South Africa to tear off his medals and trample them in the gutter should this Amendment be rejected. In the House of Lords everybody of authority, from a mining prospectus to the Sermon on the Mount, was quoted by the critics in condemnation of Chinese labour with the exception of the wise and temperate speech of the Archbishop of Canterbury. They had had similar speeches in the House of Commons. There was the speech of the Member for the Isle of Wight, who, like the hon. Member for Oldham and others who belonged to the new school of politicians, was fully prepared to give his faithful support to any Leader who would follow him. His hon. and gallant friend would follow any Leader on either side of the House, and he had availed himself of two opportunities of doing so within the last two days. His hon. and gallant friend had explained what he called the ludicrous nature of some of the statements made by those who favoured the policy of the Government. He told them that the average number of a Chinese family amounted to a wife and three children, but even if that be the case the same argument will apply to the constituency of the Isle of Wight, which was extraordinary of generation. The hon. Member for North Camberwell repeated the story of the soldiers who had fought in South Africa, and he told the soldier to tear off his medals and the badges of his honour and his Sovereign's approbation, and fling them in the gutter. The hon. Member for North Camberwell was one of the leading educationists in the House, and surely he would be better occupied in the ranks of the passive resisters than in stimulating mutiny in the ranks of the Army. The hon. and gallant Member complained that the question of the introduction of Asiatic labour was not brought up before the Commission. Of course it was not, because it was not relevant to the reference of that Commission. The whole object of that Commission was to find how far it was possible to supply the labour needs of the Transvaal from South Africa and Central Africa. The hon. Member complained that the white population of South Africa were coming back to this country, shipload after shipload. That was the Government case, for their object in introducing Chinese labour was to keep the white population in South Africa. The scheme suggested by the Government had been devised to remedy this. The most startling of all the criticisms which had been made was the attack made upon the regulations which allowed materials for religious idols to be sent to the proposed Chinese coolies in South Africa. Do they mean that the Chinese who valued so much their religious observances should not be allowed to worship in their own way in South Africa ? Surely it was one of the first principles of the British Empire to give ample facilities to every creed and to every race which existed under the wing of that Empire.

He was not concerned about defending millionaires, but if they were dealing with finance relating to South Africa, let them approach the question in a much larger sense. He would remind the House that the amount of money the millionaires in South Africa might get, was only a very small fraction of the money which the development of the Transvaal would distribute all over the world. The central gold supply of the world lay in South Africa, and consequently not only was the commerce and prosperity of South Africa concerned, but the prosperity of the whole world depended to a considerable extent on the steady supply of that precious metal. If this industry was not developed, not only would the millionaires suffer, but also the shareholders, as well as the labouring population. He believed there were about 100,000 shareholders averaging about £87. If they considered the number of companies waiting to be developed they could gauge the limitation which was now being placed upon our prosperity in South Africa, and thoughout the world, by this stagnation of the mining trade. This was a much larger question than that which concerned only financiers and bankers, for it embraced the larger basis of the gold supply of the world. He did not intend to traverse all the ground which had been gone over by the Secretary for the Colonies, for nobody could have more exhaustively covered the general aspect of the question than he did. There was always prejudice against millionaires and against men who had made vast fortunes in a short time. There was always a prejudice against millionaires and foreign shareholders, and there was a very natural prejudice which confused the gamble of the Stock Exchange, which it justly condemned, with the essential interests of a great colony. Then there was the sentiment they had heard so much about to-night in regard to Lord Milner, the Colonial Secretary, and every official and mine-owner in South Africa, who were accused of trying to induce this country to become slave-dealers and do a manifest injustice, in order that some men might pursue their lust for gold. The sentiment consisted of two varieties. First there was the sentiment which attributed to Lord Milner, the Transvaal Government, and the Colonial Secretary that they were avaricious stock jobbers, and in reality nothing more than organised slave-dealers, seeking to force upon a reluctant white people an equally reluctant body of indentured slaves, and that slavery which was the ruin of nations. The second variety of sentiment was that which objected to Chinese simply because they were Chinese, and must be the undoing of any State except their own. Such sentiments from papers, speeches, and conversations seemed not infrequent. His object was to try to clear away all sentiment and prejudice and to get at the heart of the matter. He would try to show that the real issue was not only one which concerned the future of the black man or the white man, but that it involved not only the future prosperity of the Transvaal but of all South Africa, of England, and even more closely the future of the British Empire as well. He wanted to show that this question was not only one of industrial and economic importance, but it was also of vast political, moral, and Imperial importance.

The shortage of labour in South Africa was universally admitted, and it was no new question. In the year 1835 the Dutch settlers in Cape Colony themselves were compelled by the shortage of labour to introduce Malays from their Eastern possessions, and to this they owed the variegated and picturesque Malay population of the Cape Peninsula to-day. Natal was compelled to introduce nearly 100,000 Indian coolies to work their mines, simply because she was not able to find a sufficient supply of labour amongst her own inhabitants. In Cape Colony within the last twelve years two committees had been formed by the Cape Colony Government to consider this question, and to look for some source of labour supply outside the Colony. The last committee sat in 1893, and indeed far earlier than that the Cape Colony had petitioned unanimously in favour of the introduction of Chinese labour, and a recommendation to this effect was unanimously passed by the Cape Assembly. Finally, at Bloemfontein in March, 1903, there was held a Conference of the chosen representatives of all the British Colonies in South Africa, and they passed unanimously the following resolution—

> "That this conference, after considering all available statistics, and hearing the reports of the highest official authorities of the several States, has come to the conclusion that the native population of Africa south of the Zambesi does not comprise a sufficient number of adult males capable of work to satisfy the normal rements of the several Colonies, and at the same time furnish an adequate amount of labour for the large industrial and mining centres. Under these circumstances it is evident to the conference that the opening of new sources of labour supply is requisite in the interests of all the South African States."

The greatest authorities in South Africa upon the labour question were present at that conference, and the result was that the whole conference found, after due consideration, that there was not sufficient labour for the normal requirements of the white people of South Africa. But, Sir, those who were not present at the Bloemfontein Conference appeared to be not satisfied with the result of their deliberation. They said that the members of the conference were prejudiced, and that the information put before them was not sufficient in detail, or sufficiently correct, to warrant their arriving at this decision; and then it was that representatives in the Transvaal of all classes of opinion went to the High Commissioner and begged him to appoint a Commission for thoroughly investigating the labour question.

in order that the world might know once and for all if there really was sufficient labour in South Africa for the requirements of the Transvaal. The Commission commenced its sittings on the 3rd of July last for the purposes of making inquiries as to—

> "What amount of labour is necessary for the requirements of the agricultural, mining, and other industries of the Transvaal, and to ascertain how far it is possible to obtain an adequate supply of labour to meet such requirements from Central and Southern Africa."

There were two Reports made by that Commission. Out of the twelve Commissioners ten drew up a Report which was known as the Majority Report, and two drew up a second Report which was known as the Minority Report. The Minority Commission Report was signed only by two members out of the twelve, and they appeared to be the only two gentlemen in the Transvaal, of approved authority, who opposed the present proposal. The new Majority Report laid down four conclusions—

(1) That the demand for native labour for agriculture in the Transvaal is largely in excess of the present supply, and, as the development of the country proceeds, this demand will greatly increase.

(2) That the demand for native labour for the Transvaal mining industry is in excess of the present supply by about 129,000 labourers; and, whilst no complete data of the future requirements of the whole industry are obtainable, it is estimated that the mines of the Witwatersrand alone will require, within the next five years, an additional supply of 196,000 labourers.

(3) That the demand for native labour for other industries, including railways, is greatly in excess of the present supply, and will increase concurrently with the advancement of mining and agriculture.

(4) That there is no adequate supply of labour in Central and Southern Africa to meet the above requirements.

He would deal with the Minority Report later on. They might take it for granted that at least there existed at present an immense shortage of labour in South Africa, despite the important, desperate, and almost grotesque attempts to obtain it. Take the case of mines alone as the central industry. Native labour alone in 1899 totalled 112,000 as compared with 68,000 to-day. The case of the mines was only one out of many industries, raising this cry for labour, but it was the most urgent. It had been made a reproach that this clamour for labour was confined only to the mine-owners. It had also been said that commerce and agriculture were to be sacrificed in South Africa to the greed of millionaires. The evidence, showed that every interest, every trade, whether of companies or individuals, raised exactly the same demand for more unskilled labour. Unskilled labour was the basis of every industrial trade in the world. This was not in the least a mine-owners' grievance, and South Africa called for labour as a whole. The mines said that the railways had too much, and agriculture said that the mines and railways were ruining them. Commerce declared that it was hopelessly handicapped by the want of labour. The same cry went up all round. On page 92 of the last Blue-book would be found the claims of commerce, from the representative of the Chamber of Commerce; on page 149, that "farmer, grower, servant, everybody," depended on mineral development; on page 106 the bitter complaint of the railways of shortage of labour and of the impossibility of construction; on page 179 the statement of the Chamber of Trade making the same demand; and finally, on page 116, there were chemists, metallurgists, miners, engineers, geologists, doctors, pharmaceutists, architects, accountants, auditors, electricians, surveyors, and even dentists joining in the same demand for a supply of outside labour. In the face of that evidence of a simultaneous cry for the same thing, it was surely idle to suggest, except on the assumption that everybody was a hireling of the mines, that it was only in the interests of the millionaire mine-owners that this increase of labour was demanded. By a majority of ten to two the Commission came to the conclusion that much more labour was needed.

But it had been asked: "What has been done to find this labour?" Everything had been done and large expenditure incurred in the endeavour to discover new sources of African labour to meet the demand in the Transvaal.

*Major SEELY: Except the raising of wages.

Mr. CUST admitted that wages by a great mistake had been lowered, but they had since been raised to their former level, and in many cases beyond, but the rate of living had increased. Every part of Africa had been ransacked to supply labour to the Transvaal and the British colonies. The mine-owners had gone, not only to every British colony, but also to every German colony, to German East Africa, to German West Africa, Egypt, Congo, Madagascar, Abyssinia, and Somaliland; an enormous amount of money has been spent in the endeavour to get a supply of labour; but in each case the answer was the same, "We cannot spare any labour; we want more ourselves." It had been suggested that the whole of these efforts were a blind and a pretence, that they were merely a means by which the Transvaal millionaire might the more easily slide in the servile labour he desired. Against that imputation of bad faith on the part of the Labour Association, there was the unimpeachable word of Sir Godfrey Lagden, the head of the Native Department, than whom no one knew the native territory better, and than whom no one had rendered better service to the natives of South Africa. Sir Godfrey Lagden had stated that he and his Department were perfectly cognisant of the work of the Labour Association, that they had followed it closely, that they believed it to be genuine, thorough, and unintermittent, and that the agents employed by the Association were perfectly suitable for their work. As a possible means of forcing African labour into the service of the Transvaal, it had been suggested that a certain amount of compulsion, direct or indirect, should be used. Which would the Opposition prefer—compulsion such as the Boers exercised in the old days, or Chinese labour? Then there was the suggestion of a change in the tribal system, and, thirdly, a change of native land tenure. Who, remembering what had happened in the last sixty years with reference to the tribal system and native land tenure, remembering the enormous upset and the enormous risk which those who dared to attempt to interfere with the most intimate traditional rights of the natives would run, would suggest that any Government would not rather face the possible inconveniences of Asiatic labour than the complete overturn of a country where our nominal servants were in the proportion of ten to one of their masters? As to the Minority Report, it read not so much as a Report on the evidence itself as a hostile criticism of the Majority Report. It took the Majority Report and dealt with it, ignoring, except in one or two favourable instances, the evidence brought before the Commission. Its main points were denied by every other authority. The framers of that Report seemed to deny that there was any hurry, or any need for immediate action, and to suppose that the ideal of 1899, before the war, was quite sufficient to aim at. They combined an unbased but most sanguine optimism as to the future of the Transvaal with an entirely unbased suspicion of the evidence with which they did not agree. Moreover one of the two members who signed it—Mr. Quin—only six months ago was a member of an important deputation to the Government, which desired, as labour was so short, that all railway construction should be put off until a further supply had been obtained.

The result of the shortage of labour had been absolute stagnation in every field of development by which the Transvaal might be made a rich, solvent, and self-supporting State. According to his belief, any further efficient supply of black labour was unattainable. What then were the alternatives? First of all, by far the best alternative would be British white labour if it could be obtained. No one would deny that if they could get prosperous and self-respecting white British labour for the remunerative and the less remunerative parts of Transvaal work all would be satisfied. It was argued that we had done it in Australia, and that it had been done in America. That was perfectly true, but there were two things to be remembered. One was that in America and in Australia they had practically no black population to deal with. The other point was that the ores they were working yielded three, four, or five times as much as the ores obtained in the Transvaal, and consequently there was that enormous margin to spend on wages. Two experiments in white labour had been tried already in South Africa, one indirectly through the mines, and the other directly through Government employment in the construction of railways. No doubt they were well-intentioned, but they were profoundly unsuccessful. Extracts might be read from various reports of committees of both mine managers and engineers showing the history and the results of those experiments. The details and the figures showed that they were economically impossible and socially most undesirable. Considering the loud cries of earnestness hon. Members opposite had emitted, he thought it was their duty to read very carefully the particulars given in the Blue-book before they made up their minds as to the employment of white labour in South Africa. On this question of the employment of white labour in South Africa, nobody, unless he believed that Lord Milner and every other official, from the highest to the lowest grade, all the experts and the mine-owners, were knaves and liars, could doubt the cumulative evidence embodied in the Blue-book to the effect that British white labour was impossible. And surely the reason was not far to seek. A white man would never work at the same task as the black man. The situation in South Africa was a totally new one in the history of modern civilisation. It was the case of white man's country and white man's climate, where white men could live and breed, but with an enormous and overwhelming preponderance of free black men who would not work. In the Southern States of America the black population were wholly bond and slave. In Australia and in Western America, during the period of development, the coloured races of both continents were practically non-existent. Both were white man's countries, and in both white worked by the side of white in the highest and the lowest labour. India was not a white man's country, so the question did not there arise. But in South Africa it arose in fierce and fearful reality, and it was upon the treatment of that question that the whole future of South Africa depended.

But the question was asked—If they could not get British white labour why not try white labour from other countries? Let the House consider the results of such an importation. In Natal they had the Indian coolie. Indian coolies could be, to some extent, controlled though their number, their *status* as British subjects, and their trading capacities and commercial freedom had proved of infinite difficulty in Natal. But in Natal it was laid down that no British subject could have any political privilege in the country to which he had emigrated higher than that which he enjoyed in the country from which he came. But over other white men we should have no control whatever. If they imported 100,000 Hungarians, Bohemians, or what not, they would get them cheap, but they would get them nasty. They would set up a lower standard of living and a lower standard of life, and the British emigrant would be exposed to a competition from which he could not be protected, and which would ultimately ruin him. They could not prevent the white man or quasi-white man getting the franchise, or competing with the British white labourer or white tradesman in every possible way, or lowering the standard of living and the standard of life. It was this class who introduced corruption into the politics of New York, first into the municipal and then into the national Legislature, and finally by a vagrant and easily purchased vote obtained control of the national Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen, who was not a calumniator of America, speaking of the "poor white trash" introduced into America by this system had said—

> "Shiftless, ignorant, improvident, with no aims in the present nor hope for the future, citizens in nothing but the possession of votes, they were a standing reproach to the system that produced them, and the most convincing proof of its economic as well as its moral failure."

Surely the introduction of Chinese labour contains less danger than the infinite national evil suggested by that sentence. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen had disposed of the theory that all labour in the Transvaal could be put into the hands of white men. As to wages in the years 1902–3 the total wages fund in the Transvaal in salaries and wages amounted to £4,700,000. Out of this total the whites received, roughly speaking, £3,500,000, and the blacks £1,250,000; that was to say, the whites received some 70 per cent. of the total wages paid to the workers in the mineral works of the Transvaal.

Mr. MARKHAM was understood to say that the correct percentage was only thirty for white labour.

Mr. CUST believed his figures were correct. The facts being as he had stated, what alternative was there but that of the introduction of Chinese? That was the only thing left. One objection to the Chinaman was that he was a Chinaman. That, of course, he could not help, and he believed one of the first principles of Liberalism and even of humanity was that no man should be penalised for congenitial defects. It was admitted that he helped to build up California; he undoubtedly did a great deal of pioneering in Australia; and in countries like Borneo, Singapore, and elsewhere, he was found to be invaluable as a servant and labourer. As to the treatment of the Chinese they would be entirely protected in China; they would enlist there; they would go freely; they would know where they were going; they would take their wives and families; and at the end of their time they would be repatriated. As to the Englishmen, the British Consul would be on the spot, and cases of excess or of pressure beyond legitimate limits, would be reported by him to the proper authorities. The opposition to the proposal came largely from prejudice and sentiment. At this time of day, after we had gone through the late war for the sake of South Africa, it was absurd that prejudice and sentiment, and, he ventured to say, cant, should be allowed to stand in the way of a great economical and Imperial necessity.

What other opposition was there? There was the opposition of Cape Colony. Cape Colony was in the throes of a general election, and it was always difficult to guage the real opinion of a community at such a time. But on two occasions, years ago, Cape Colonists themselves petitioned for the importation of Chinese labour. There was then only the opposition of Australia and New Zealand. We valued our colonies, but it was somewhat absurd that New Zealand, with a population about equal to that of a provincial town in England, should dictate the policy of the Empire in this matter. As to the change of opinion in South Africa, if hon. Members would only read the despatches, addresses, petitions, and the debates in the Legislative Council, they would be able to judge for themselves whether there was not such a thing as a *bonâ fide* opinion even in South Africa. Lord Milner saw the danger. He had changed his opinion because he knew the real state of things and the impending disaster; he had laid himself open to the charge of inconsistency in order to support what he believed to be the only salvation of the country. If there was any one lesson writ large in our colonial history, written in blood and tears, it was the awful danger of interference with the men on the spot, the men who wanted, the men who knew. In hardly any case of interference by the home Government had the results been satisfactory. Nowhere had that lesson been learnt with greater fulness or bitterness and sorrow than in South Africa. From the days of Somerset to the days of Bartle Frere the finger of Downing Street had been a curse on the land. Left to Sir Bartle Frere there might have been no retrocession of the Transvaal, no Majuba, none of the weariness of the flesh and the friction between Dutch and English, no Transvaal War, and there might not have been the anxiety and distress of to-day. Both Parties had been equally to blame. He asked the House and all who valued our colonial future to see that Downing Street to-day did not interfere with the wishes of the Colonies. Downing Street used to be a by-word; she was so no longer, and she now asked the House to give its assent to the wishes of the Transvaal Colony. Therefore, it was not only on economic, social, and national grounds, but also on the larger ground of Imperial policy that he respectfully urged the House to reject this Amendment.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said he proposed to follow the example of the Colonial Secretary and lay a few general considerations before the House. We commenced the late war in South Africa and carried it on with the object of enfranchising certain persons, and of enabling Englishmen to live under the franchise and liberty in the Transvaal. Were they doing that at the present moment? They had heard a great deal in the recent debate about the iniquities of dumping. But what were they doing at present in the Transvaal? Dumping down Chinese. They had been told that they ought to listen to the voice of the Colonies—that the unity of the Empire depended on this. Well, Cape Colony, Australia, and New Zealand had protested against the action of His Majesty's Government in this matter, and in the Cape Colony the protest had been so strong that, although the two political parties had been divided by a bitter feud, each at the recent General Election tried to obtain support by declaring against the introduction of Chinese labour into South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman had naturally based his defence on financial grounds; he had said that the Transvaal would assuredly be ruined unless workers could be obtained for the mines. It did not signify how or where they were obtained, but the main object was to secure them. Already some pressure had been used upon the South African natives to induce them to work in the mines, and now it was sought to get forced labour from China. Everybody knew that where slavery was adopted in mines the mine-owners gained. Years ago it was adopted in the Spanish Colonies and the mine-owner gained although the Colonies might not have benefited. Asiatic labour was forbidden in Australia, and in the United States and Canada the feeling was strongly against it. Yet the mine-owners were seeking to get this labour in the Transvaal mines. They pleaded that they could not get native labour, but was it not likely that they themselves created the difficulty in regard to labour in South Africa, because they wanted power to pay what wages they pleased? They were not particularly scrupulous. They got up a revolution because they said they were helots, and since then they had been endeavouring to obtain permission to employ forced labour. Before the war took place in 1897, because there were so many native boys unable to obtain employment, wages were reduced 30 per cent., and it was noteworthy that in Mr. Fitzpatrick's "Official Defence of the War" it was declared that the aim of the war was to reduce wages, and that the effect in the Transvaal would be a saving of £650,000 in the annual wage bill. The only object of the mine-owners from the first had been to reduce the wages bill. They tried to cut down the rates before the war, and again as soon as the war was over. That was what the war was for.

Mr. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) said that in June, 1899, the Boer Government by proclamation reduced the native wages.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said that in that instance the Boer Government unfortunately yielded to the importunity of the mine-owners. No doubt they thought the mine-owners were supported by public opinion in this country and that therefore it would be wiser to yield that point. The late Colonial Secretary invented a scheme by which he thought he would be able to drive the natives into the mines by pointing out to them the advantages of polygamy. An extra wife was added as a bait, but he said they would have to pay £2 per annum for her. He himself was happy to say that that scheme did not succeed. The next thing they found was that convicts were employed on the mines, but they were not sent underground; and it was now reserved for this House to oblige the Transvaal mine-owners by providing them with Chinese labour for underground work. The right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary went out of his way to praise the mine-owners. He would not go out of his way to abuse them; but it was extraordinary that the right hon. Gentleman should have praised them when it was well-known their only object was to make millions out of poor men. About 12,000,000 persons must have been induced to gamble in South African mining shares, and the eminent gentlemen whom the right hon. Gentleman delighted to honour were in the fullest sense of the word promoters of mining companies, some of which might pay, but the majority of which would not pay. What they wanted was to humbug fools into buying their shares. No doubt the introduction of Chinese labour would benefit the mine-owners and would also benefit the 12,000,000 gamblers who were induced to gamble in mining shares. He should like to know how many of those gamblers were in the House. It had been decided with regard to public houses that a magistrate who was interested could not vote; and he wondered, if gentlemen who were interested in South African mines were excluded from voting on the Amendment, whether the majority would be in favour of this scheme of slavery in South Africa. He did no think that the scheme would be any benefit to the Transvaal. The object of persons who kept shops was to get customers, and where there was a large population of working men there would also be a large number of shops. But the Chinese would not be allowed to go to the shops in the Transvaal, and they would eat nothing but rice, which would be imported from their native land. The mine-owners, the friends of the right hon. Gentleman, made no secret as to what their object was. They said their object was political, and that they were afraid of trades unions and men who had votes. They were, therefore, trying to build up a great British possession with a working population of slaves. He said there was no place in the British Empire for such a colony. The right hon. Gentleman talked about the £35,000,000 loan, but he should like to know whether there was any bargain between the late Colonial Secretary and the mine-owners with regard to that loan. It was true the mine-owners undertook to underwrite £10,000,000 of it, but they shirked out of that. He would like to know if there was any bargain with the mine-owners with regard to foreign labour in South Africa. He confessed it looked as if there had been. If this scheme was not slavery, what was slavery? If it was not slavery, it was only not slavery very much in the same sense as the Government was not a protectionist Government. The Chinaman would be taken away from China and would have to spend three years in servitude. If he quitted his location and was found walking about as any free man might, he would be arrested, and if he did not work he would be punished with six months' hard labour. When his children were sixteen years of age, unless they consented to enter into the same servitude, they would be sent back to China. He asked—Was not that slavery?

Then, again, the right hon. Gentleman said that the Chinaman was to be allowed to take as many wives with him as he pleased. What would be the position of those wives and their numerous families? The real truth was that there was no pretence that this was not slavery. Lord Onslow said that the Chinese would be taken from China and put into loose boxes. Was that a proper way to talk about human beings? He was glad to say that such language had shocked a great many bishops, with whom he was not always absolutely in accord. Some of them protested in the name of humanity against the monstrous proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. It was a disgrace to China to agree to this proposal, and it was a disgrace to this country, which fancied itself to be a civilised nation, to try and force it on the Chinese. In 1855, when Peru contracted with the Chinese Government for the export of coolies, a very different Government from the present Government, the Liberal Government of the day, stepped in and protested in the name of humanity against Peru doing what it was proposed that this country should now do. The Colonial Secretary said that it was monstrous to attack the Legislative Assembly of the Transvaal. The right hon. Gentleman said he would not dare to look Africa in the face. He himself did not know what that meant; but the Legislative Council consisted of nominated men. He would as soon think of producing the House of Lords as the best Assembly in this country as of assigning to the Legislative Council that position in South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman went out of his way to insult General Botha, General Delarey, and others who were honoured and respected not only by the Boers but by many men in this country. Did the right hon. Gentleman think that that was the best way to gain over the Boers to his cause, or calm feeling between the two races in South Africa? The right hon. Gentleman abused General Botha because he wrote to him stating that the Boers were against this proposal; and the right hon. Gentleman said of that gallant foe that he did not believe him and that he would not be tricked by such a paltry device. He protested against this iniquity which was contemplated by the Government; and he thought it was very unfair that they had not been given an opportunity of discussing the question except on the debate on the Address. In the debate on the last Amendment one Minister said he would vote for a great fiscal change because the Prime Minister was absent; another Minister said he would vote for it because Russia was at war with Japan. He asked hon. Gentlemen not to have any confidence in such Ministers. Their ability might be great, but it was latent; and their policy might be excellent, but

no one knew what it was. He asked every hon. Gentleman to remember that every vote given against the Amendment would be a vote in favour of slavery and against democracy and freedom and the working men of England. The course of the Government was nearly run. The day of judgment was yawning for them, when they would have to account to the country; and he could assure Ministers that if the Liberals got a majority at the next election, the very first thing they would do would be to reverse this policy, which was a disgrace and a dishonour to the country.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Malcolm*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

WILD BIRDS PROTECTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

Adjourned at three minutes before Twelve o'clock.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CXXIX.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Local Authorities (Qualification of Women) [H.L.]	*Earl Beauchamp*	Read 1^{a} 11th Feb. (964)
Newcastle Chapter (Amendment) [H.L.]	*Lord Bishop of St. Albans*	Read 1^{a} 12th Feb. (1139)
Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) [H.L.]	*Lord Ribblesdale*	Read 1^{a} 12th Feb. (1138)
Polling Districts (County Councils) [H.L.]	*Lord Ribblesdale*	Read 1^{a} 12th Feb. (1138)
*Sea Fisheries [H.L.]	*Earl of Onslow*	Read 1^{a} 2nd Feb. (73) Read 2^{a} 16th Feb. (1454)
Select Vestries [H.L.]		Read 1^{a} 2nd Feb. (6)
Weights and Measures (Metric System) [H.L.]	*Lord Kelvin*	Read 1^{a} 2nd Feb. (73)

(B) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Aged Pensioners	*Mr. Remnant*	Read 1^{o} 5th Feb. (483)
Aged Pensioners (No. 2)	*Mr. Goulding*	Read 1^{o} 5th Feb. (484)
Agricultural Education in Elementary Schools	*Mr. Jesse Collings*	Read 1^{o} 16th Feb. (1501)
Agricultural Holdings	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1^{o} 5th Feb. (487)
Church Discipline	*Sir John Willox*	Read 1^{o} 5th Feb. (484)
Coal Mines (Employment)	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Read 1^{o} 15th Feb. (1339)
Coal Mines Regulation	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Read 1^{o} 8th Feb. (599)
Colonial Marriages	*General Laurie*	Read 1^{o} 5th Feb. (486)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Conspiracy (Ireland)	*Mr. Doogan*	Read 1° 9th Feb. (734)
Contempt of Court (Ireland)	*Mr. Sheehy*	Read 1° 9th Feb. (734)
Coroners' Inquests (Railway Fatalities)	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (487)
Easement of Light	*Mr. Fletcher Moulton*	Read 1° 9th Feb. (840)
Factory and Workshop Act (1901) Amendment	*Mr. Tennant*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (1340)
Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (485)
Hall-marking of Foreign Plate	*Mr. Samuel Roberts*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (482)
Highways	*Mr. Henry Hobhouse*	Read 1° 9th Feb (733)
Home Industries	*Colonel Denny*	Read 1° 16th Feb. (1500)
Irish Lights Board	*Captain Donelan*	Read 1° 9th Feb. (734)
Irish Tobacco	*Mr. William Redmond*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (485)
Jury Acts (Ireland)	*Mr. John Campbell*	Read 1° 9th Feb. (734)
Lands Valuation (Scotland)	*Mr. M'Crae*	Read 1° 15th Feb. (1339)
Land Values (Assessment and Rating)	*Mr. Trevelyan*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (480)
Leaseholds Enfranchisement	*General Laurie*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (482)
Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland)	*Mr. Hunter Craig*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (485)
Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales)	*Mr. Herbert Roberts*	Read 1° 16th Feb. (1501)
Local Authorities (Taxation and Purchase of Land)	*Mr. Logan*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (486)
Local Government (Ireland) Acts Amendment	*Mr. Field*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (482)
Local Taxation	*Mr. Cripps*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (484)
Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister	*Mr. Charles Seely*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (481)
Medical Act (1886) Amendment	*General Laurie*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (486)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Merchandise Marks	*Sir Howard Vincent*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (486)
Merchant Shipping (Lighthouses)	*Mr. Plummer*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (482)
*Metropolitan Improvements (Funds)	*Mr. Victor Cavendish*	Read 1° 11th Feb. (1340)
Mines (Eight Hours)	*Mr. Osmond Williams*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (482)
Ministry of Commerce	*Mr. Louis Sinclair*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (483)
Musical Copyright	*Mr. Mount*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (480)
Nurses	*Dr. Farquharson*	Read 1° 15th Feb. (1339)
Old Age Pensions	*Mr. Spear*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (485)
Old Age Pensions (No. 2)	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (487)
Out-door Relief (Friendly Societies)	*Mr. Reginald Lucas*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (480) Bill withdrawn 10th Feb. (854)
Outlawries		Read 1° 2nd Feb. (481)
Prevention of Pollution of Rivers and Streams	*Sir Francis Powell*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (484)
Private Legislation Procedure (Wales)	*Mr. Vaughan-Davies*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (484)
Public Libraries	*Mr. Tennant*	Read 1° 15th Feb. (1340)
Public Libraries Acts (Extension)	*Mr. Kenyon*	Read 1° 12th Feb. (1256)
Public Trustee	*Sir Howard Vincent*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (486)
Purchase of Land (England and Wales)	*Mr. Jesse Collings*	Read 1° 16th Feb. (1500)
Railways (Private Sidings)	*Sir John Brunner*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (480)
Registration of Clubs (Ireland) [10]	*Mr. O'Neill*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (482)
Re-vaccination	*Sir John Tuke*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (483)
Roman Catholic Disabilities Removal	*Mr. M'Kean*	Read 1° 9th Feb. (733)
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Saturdays (Ireland)	*Mr. Sloan*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (487)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday	*Mr. Perks*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (485)
Savings Banks Acts Amendment	*Sir Albert Rollit*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (487)
Shops	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (485)
Small Dwellings (Acquisition)	*Sir Thomas Wrightson*	Read 1° 9th Feb. (733)
Small Holders (Scotland)	*Mr. Black*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (488)
Small Holdings	*Mr. Jesse Collings*	Read 1° 16th Feb. (1500)
Sunday Closing (Wales) Act (1881) Amendment	*Mr. Herbert Roberts*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (488)
Town Tenants (Ireland)	*Mr. MacVeagh*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (480)
Trade Marks	*Mr. Fletcher Moulton*	Read 1° 9th Feb. (840)
Trades Unions and Trade Disputes	*Mr. Paulton*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (481)
Tuberculosis (Animals) Compensation	*Mr. Price*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (483)
Wages Boards	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Read 1° 9th Feb. (734)
Weights and Measures	*Mr. Bousfield*	Read 1° 5th Feb. (481)
Wild Birds Protection Acts Amendment	*Mr. Sydney Buxton*	Read 1° 9th Feb. (734) Read 2° 16th Feb. (1600)

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1904.

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Factory and Workshop Acts (Particulars of Piece Work Wages) (Wearing Apparel),—Copy of Order, dated 17th December 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, applying, with modifications, the provisions of Section 116 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, to the manufacture of Wearing Apparel, and revoking the Order, dated 22nd April 1897 [1 Edw. VII., c. 22, s. 126 (3)]	2 February	40 days
Factory and Workshop Acts (Special Exception—Creameries),—Copy of Order, dated 23rd October 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 42 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, granting certain special exceptions to Creameries, and revoking the Order (Ireland), dated 9th June 1902 [1 Edw. VII., c. 22, s. 126 (3)]	2 February	40 days
Factory and Workshop Acts (Special Exception—Overtime),—Copy of Order, dated 29th December 1903, made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in pursuance of Section 49 of The Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, with regard to the overtime employment of women on not more than 30 days in the year; and revoking all existing Orders [1 Edw. VII., c. 22, s. 126 (3)]	2 February	40 days
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O. Lord G. Hamilton, *Feb. 9*, 795.

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O. Sir J. Gorst, *Feb. 11*, 1052.

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Os. Sir J. Gorst, *Feb. 11*, 1050, 1051.

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Q. Capt. Sinclair; *A.* Mr. A. Chamberlain, *Feb. 11*, 1011.

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Os. Sir J. Gorst, *Feb. 11*, 1050, 1051.

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Os. Sir J. Gorst, *Feb. 11*, 1050.

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Q. Sir S. King; *A.* Mr. A. Chamberlain, *Feb. 16*, 1476.

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Q. Sir S. King ; *A.* Lord Stanley, *Feb. 8*, 568.

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Q. Sir S. King ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Feb. 16*, 1479-1480.

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Q. Mr. H. Roberts ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Feb. 4*, 336-337.

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Q. Mr H. Roberts ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Feb*, *16*, 1489-1490.

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Q. Lord George Hamilton ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Feb. 4*, 329.

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Os. Lord G. Hamilton, *Feb. 9*, 794, 795 ; Sir C. Dilke, *Feb. 10*, 858 ; Sir J. Gorst, *Feb. 11*, 1049.

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Qs. Sir C. McLaren, Sir T. Dewar ; *As.* Mr. Brodrick, *Feb. 15*, 1314, 1315.

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Qs. Sir T. Dewar, Sir C. McLaren, Sir T. Wrightson, Mr. Maconochie ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Feb. 9*, 722-723.

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Q. Mr. Buchanan ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *Feb. 11*, 1020–1021.

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Os. Mr. Haldane, *Feb. 8*, 702 ; Mr. P. Pease, *Feb. 9*, 737 ; Sir H. Vincent, *Feb. 10*, 873 ; Mr. W. Ridley, 925 ; Sir G. Parker, 958 ; Mr. Chaplin, *Feb. 11*, 1061 ; Sir J. Brunner, 1115, 1116.

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Q. Mr. MacVeagh ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 12*, 1196.

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Q. Sir T. Esmonde ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 4*, 354.

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Qs. Mr. Boland ; *As.* Mr. Atkinson, *Feb. 8*, 595 ; *Feb. 11*, 1030.

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Q. Mr. Nannetti ; *A.* Wyndham, *Feb. 15*, 1329.

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Q. Mr. Lundon ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 15*, 1332, 1333.

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Q. Mr. O'Doherty ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 16*, 1482.

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Q. Mr. Duffy ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham *Feb. 16*, 1481.

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Q. Boland ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 11*, 1035.

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Q. Mr. Duffy ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 16*, 1498.

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Q. Mr. O'Malley ; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 11*, 1016.

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Q. Sir T. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 4*, 354.

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Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 8*, 594–595.

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Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 9*, 728–729.

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Q. Mr. Sloan; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 4*, 355.

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Q. Sir T. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. V. Cavendish, *Feb. 4*, 349.

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        Q. Mr. C. Devlin; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *Feb. 11*, 1035-1036.
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      - *Q.* Sir J. Leng; *A.* Mr. Lyttelton, *Feb. 10,* 847.
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